MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

FIRST ANNUAL SWIMSUIT EDITION!

#239 • APRIL 2003

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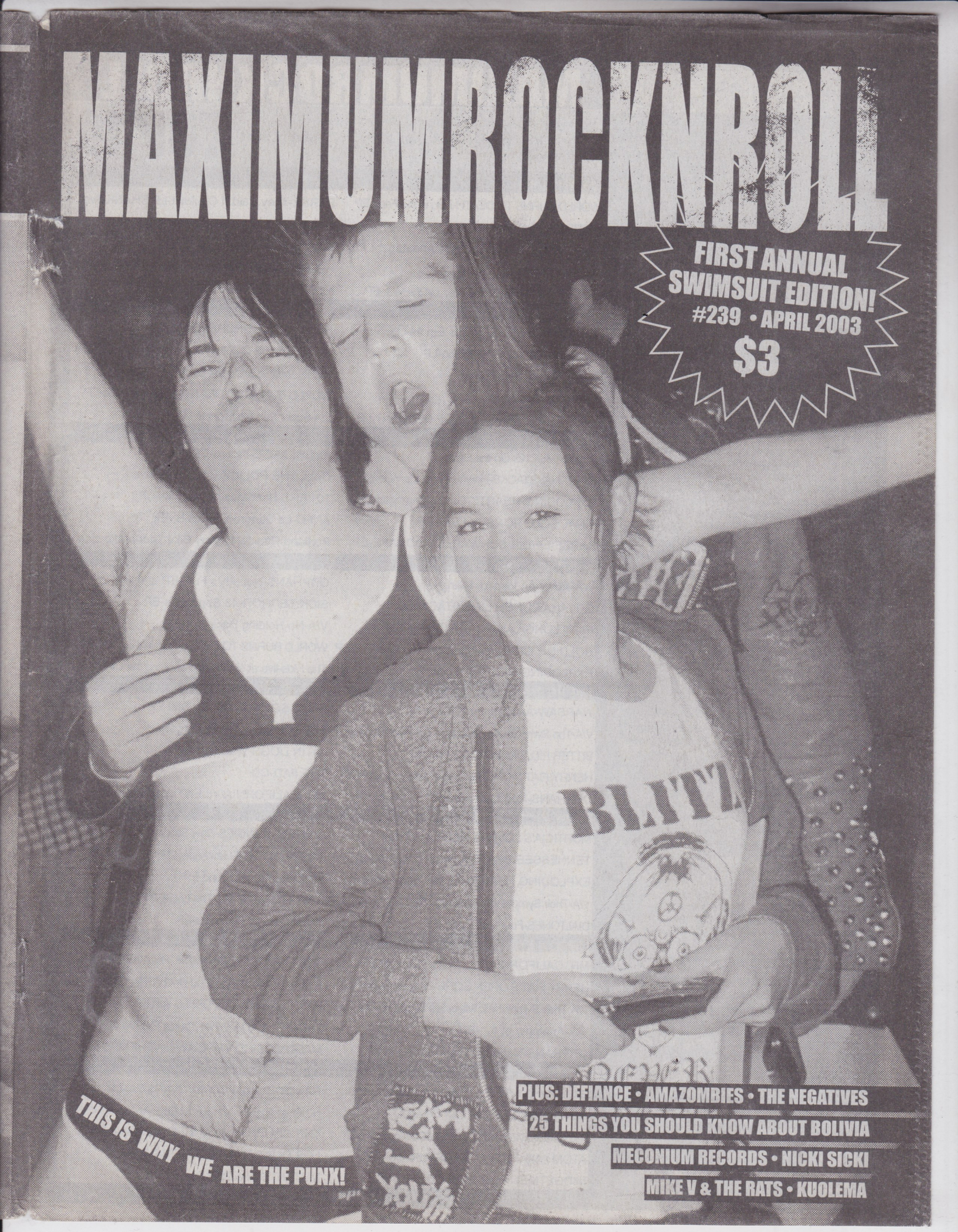

PLUS: DEFIANCE • AMAZOMBIES • THE NEGATIVES

25 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT BOLIVIA

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
#148, 150-154, 156-157, 159-163, 166, 168-175, 178-181, 184-211, 213-238 are as stated above in subscription info. See page after next.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!
Ad Reservations: call to make sure.
Ad Copy In (with payment): by 15th of previous month–NO LATER!!!
Issue out: by 2nd week of following month.

★★ AD RATES & SIZES!! ★★
1/6 page: (2 3/8" x 5") $30
1/3 page long: (2 3/8" x 10") $85
1/3 page square: (5" x 4 7/8") $100
1/2 page: (7 1/4" x 5") $150
Full page (7 1/4" x 10") $400

AD CRITERIA:
We will not accept major label or related ads, or ads for comps that include major label bands. We reserve the right to refuse ads for any reason at any time. Send ads on paper, properly sized.

CLASSIFIEDS: NEW PRICE! $2 for a maximum of 40 words. No racist, sexist or fascist material. Send typed if possible.

COVER: Mike Thorn

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See page 5 for foreign distribution info.

Please send all records, zines, letters, articles, scene reports, photos, subscriptions, interviews, ads, etc., to:

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www.maximumrocknroll.com
mrr@maximumrocknroll.com
(use this mainly for comments & letters. Use phone for ads & other business stuff)

TOP 10

For what it's worth (not much), here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so...) lists of stuff we review.

TIM BROOKS

- WORLD BURNS TO DEATH-Acid in the Face-EP
- HORROR-First Blood-10"
- THE DEAD ONES-Det Si Sta Andetaget-LP
- D.S.B.-EP/RORSCHACH-LP
- GIANT HAYSTACKS-How We Lost the War-EP
- BARSE-They Said It Couldn't-LP/SHANK-live
- WOLF BRIGADE-Life Comes Ripping-10"
- WARSAW-An Idea for Killing-LP
- HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Patmos or Bust-EP
- NEGATIVE APPROACH-Tied Down-LP

BOB COONS

- MUNICIPAL WASTE-Waste 'Em All-LP
- WARSAW-An Idea For Killing-LP
- D.S.B.-Pure Cultivation-EP
- V/A-Polar Grinder-LP
- SCOTT BAIO ARMY/LINE OF DESCENT-LP
- HEAD HIT'S CONCRETE-10" & EP
- HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Patmos or Bust-EP
- RUNNAMUCKS-On the Brink-LP
- WORLD BURNS TO DEATH-Acid in the Face-EP
- V/A-Super Sabado Gigante-LP and live

ARWEN CURRY

- RUNNAMUCKS-On the Brink-LP
- GIANT HAYSTACKS-How We Lost the War-EP
- EXPLODING HEARTS-Guitar Romantic-LP
- FINAL SOLUTIONS-Eat Shit-EP
- BARSE-LP/DIE SCHWARZEN SCHAFE-EP
- AMBULANCE-Words-EP
- CALL THE POLICE/BACTERIA-live
- 101'ERS-Beat Music Dynamite-LP
- ANFO-La Sangre-EP/D.S.B.-EP
- Portland Radical History Bike Tour-audio zine

JONATHAN FLOYD

- WARSAW-An Idea for Killing-LP
- GUYANA PUNCH LINE/STACK-live
- IRON LUNG/LANA DAGALES-split LP
- HOLDING ON-Question What You Live For-LP
- EXPLODING HEARTS-Guitar Romantic-LP
- ORPHANS-Nobody's Fool-EP and live
- SICK TERROR-43 Segundos-EP
- V/A-No Holding Back-3xLP
- WORLD BURNS TO DEATH-Acid in the Face-EP
- The Kids-live at shows and shutting the City down

JEFF HERRMANN

- WARSAW-An Ideal for Killing-LP
- V/A-The Sympathetic Sounds of Toe-Rag Studios-LP
- BITTER PILLS/PINK SEXIES-split EP
- HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Patmos or Bust-EP
- ORPHANS-Nobody's Fool-EP and live
- FINAL SOLUTIONS-Eat Shit-EP
- SUBSONICS-A Lot to Forget-LP
- LATIN DOGS-Warning!-EP
- THE FAD-CD
- MR. CALIFORNIA/VILENTLY ILL-split EP

KENNY KOOS

- MORTICIA'S LOVERS-R&R Overdose-LP
- TENNESSEE BEATS-A Place In Reno-45
- EXPLODING HEARTS-Guitar Romantic-LP
- V/A-Their Sympathetic Majesties Request:Vol II-2xLP
- DIALTONES-Four Last Blasts-EP
- THE EVIL THINGIES-New Shapes in Sound-10"
- THE WON TONS-Hex Appeal-LP
- VANDALS-Underground-EP
- NIPPLE ERECTORS-The Lost-EP
- ONE MAN ARMY-Victoria-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- MR. CALIFORNIA/VILENTLY ILL-split EP
- HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Patmos or Bust-EP
- V/A-Their Sympathetic Majesties Request:Vol II-2xLP
- V/A-Anatomy of A...-EP
- ORPHANS-Nobody's Fool-EP and live
- GIANT HAYSTACKS-EP/MUNICIPALWASTE-LP & live
- A FEAST OF SNAKES-LP/MOVERN CALLAR-film
- PINK SEXIES/BITTER PILLS-split EP
- TARANTULADA-What Young People Say-EP
- MASONICS-CD/WARSAW-LP/SHEMPS-live

RAY LUJAN

- EXPLODING HEARTS-LP/MEDIA WHORES-CD
- DEAD THINGS-Ride Your Bike-CD
- VICTIM-Everything-CD/THE PINE-Lead Blocks-LP
- ATOM AND HIS PACKAGE-Attention-CD
- MIDGETMEN-Pool Party-CD
- RANDY-Steppin Out-EP/WARSAW-LP
- NONE MORE BLACK-EP/STRIKE ANYWHERE-EP
- THE CRUSH/HEADS & BODIES-split EP
- LOS OLVIDADOS/CLIFTONS-split EP
- MUTANTS-live/GBH-live

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible–one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only release. See records section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

BOBBY MANIC

- EXPLODING HEARTS-Guitar Romantic-LP
- BACKWOOD CREATURES-Living Legends-LP
- MORTICIA'S LOVERS-R&R Overdose-LP
- SWINGIN' UTTERS-Fat Club Single-45
- TIP TOPPERS-Packed to the Rafters-LP

WILL RISK

- HOLDING ON-Question what You live For-LP
- NEGATIVE APPROACH-Tied Down-LP
- MUNICIPAL WASTE-LP/live/KUNG FU RICK-live
- SUICIDE FILE-LP/AMERICAN STEEL-EP
- GIANT HAYSTACKS-How We Lost the War-EP

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- V/A-Super Sabado Gigante-LP and live
- ORPHANS-Nobody's Fool-EP and live
- HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Patmos or Bust-EP
- NOFX-Zyclone B Bath House-45
- THE DEAD ONES-LP/BARSE-LP
- IRON LUNG/LANA DAGALES-split LP
- RADIO 4-12"/MARA'AKATE-12"
- BURN YOUR BRIDGES-LP/WARSAW-LP
- THE HORROR-First Blood-10"
- THE SUICIDE FILE-Twilight-LP

WILLIE NELSON

- MIGRA VIOLENTA-HC Crust-LP
- COUNTERBLAST-Impassivity-2xLP
- IRON LUNG/LANA DAGALES-split LP
- D.S.B.-Pure Cultivation-EP
- FINAL SOLUTIONS-Eat Shit-EP
- SCOTT BAIO ARMY/LINE OF DESCENT-LP
- DURGA-Earn Your Red Wings, Mormon-EP
- GUNS LIQUOR & WHORES-Serpico-10"
- HANGING ROTTEN-Your Cheatin' Heart-LP
- V/A-Super Sabado Gigante-LP and live

DONNA POOLE

TOO TRAUMATIZED

BRUCE ROEHRS

- TEMPLARS/REDUCERS SF/PRESSURE POINT-live
- ANTISEEN-LP/NEGATIVE APPROACH-LP
- RUNNAMUCKS-LP/D.S.B.-EP
- WOLF BRIGADE-Life Comes Ripping-10"
- DIE SCHWARZEN SCHAFE-Last Gang-EP
- RORSCHACH-LP/MUNICIPAL WASTE-LP
- THE DEAD ONES-LP/HEADCASE-EP
- BRODYS MILITIA/CRUNKY KIDS-split EP
- MOLOTOV COCKTAIL/DISTRAUGHT-split EP
- BURY THE LIVING-Bathed in Blood-EP

MIKE THORN

- WOLF BRIGADE-10"/CALL THE POLICE-live
- DIE SCHWARZEN SCHAFE-Last Gang-EP
- BARSE-LP/THE DEAD ONES-LP
- HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Patmos or Bust-EP
- FINAL SOLUTIONS-Eat Shit-EP/D.S.B.-EP
- BURY THE LIVING-EP/BORN DEAD-live
- WORLD BURNS TO DEATH-Acid in the Face-EP
- HOLDING ON-LP/SICK TERROR-EP
- ANFO-La Sangre-EP/ORPHANS-EP
- GUYANA PUNCH LINE/NOFX/CRUCIAL UNIT-live

RYAN WELLS

- BARSE-They Said It Couldn't Happen-LP
- HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Patmos or Bust-EP
- MR. CALIFORNIA/VILENTLY ILL-split EP
- FINAL SOLUTIONS-Eat Shit-EP
- NEDERBIETELS-Kejje Nagaan-45
- ANTISEEN-Noise For The Sake Of Noise-LP
- V/A-The Sympathetic Sounds of Toe-Rag Studios-LP
- MHZ-Action Figure-EP
- V/A-Anatomy of A...-EP
- THE EVIL THINGIES-New Shapes in Sound-10"

ZINE TOP TEN

- Chumpire #157
- Father's Day #1
- Hippie Vomit #2
- Portland Radical History Bike Tour
- Razorcake #12
- Rock Out! Ideas on Booking DIY Shows #1
- Zoop! #21
- Quickdummies #15
- America? #10
- Cherrybomb

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#148/Sept '95. Soda Jerks, Toe Rag, Thorazine, Sacred Straight, Wizo, Opposition Party, Moody Jackson, Adversives, Opcion Crucial, Rebel, Rebel, Teen Idols, Walking Ruins.

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#152/Jan '96. Delilah Jacks, Battalion of Saints, Bottom Feeders, Turbonegro, Murder Junkies, Junior, Assfort, Retch Records, Com-Fract, Dead End Kids.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#157/June '96. Against All Authority, The Criminals, Wardance, Heroines, Brain Brats, Rudiments, Chinese Millionaires, Sons Of Hercules, Your Mother, Yellow Scab.

#159/Aug '96. Smugglers, Brand New Unit, Tone Deaf Pig-Dogs, Round Ear Spocks, David Hayes/Very Small Recs, Man Afraid, Blind Side, Vox Populi, Death Wish Kids, Fun People, Fat Drunk & Stupid.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#168/May '97. Cretin 66, Fishsticks, Distemper, Enewetak, UK Subs, Luxo Champ, Jake Sayless, "Pioneers of Punk."

#169/June '97. Hand Skin, Cluster Bomb Unit, Jihad, Purgen, Speed Queens, Remission, Halflings, The Old Man, Deface.

#170/July '97. Bristle, Mine, Tedio Boys, The 4 Cockroaches, Absconded, Meanwhile. Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hoodrat.

#171/Aug '97. Violent Society, Strychnine, Idiots, Knuckle Heads, Race Traitor, Patrick Grindstaff, Misanthropists.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#173/Oct '97. Hot Water Music, Fat Day, Los Tigres Guapos, Les Partisans, Bristols, My 3 Scum, Space Shits, Pessimiser Recs, Reclusives, Nick Qwik.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#178/Mar '98. Economics issue. Forgotten Rebels, Dirtys, Josh Collins, American Steel, Letterbombs, Gyogun Rend's, Go-Devils, Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, Garage Rats.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, Stiletto Boys, All Bets Off, Bonecrusher, Summerjack, Cell Blck 5, DDI, Normals, Pirate Radio issue.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#211/Dec '00. Fly & Seth Tobocman, Anti/Dogmatikss, Hissyfits, Aus Rotten, Media Blitz, Rocks, Hospital Food, Falsies, White Stripes, 9 Shocks Terror, Tijuana Bibles.

#213/Feb '01. Fun People, Onward to Mayhem, Ugly Pop, Midnight Evils, Atrocious Madness, Bread & Water, Josh Peach, Zodiac Killers.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum , Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#228/May '02. 3 Summers Gone, Haymaker, Killed In Action, 31G, Cheetah Chrome, Stardumb, This Computer Kills, Isso•Keh, Strong Intention, Desobediencia Civil, Caustic Christ, Lack of Knowledge.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct. '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Oct. '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead

#235/Nov. '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war scene reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Dec. '02. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore Fanzine, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#237/Jan. '03. Top Ten Records of 2002, "Music as a Weapon: Artists in Wartime," Dirt Bike Annie, Let It Burn, Stockyard Stoics, King Khan & Shrines, 625 Records, Feast Or Famine, Rudimentary Peni, Coachwhips, Self Defense.

#238/Feb. '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

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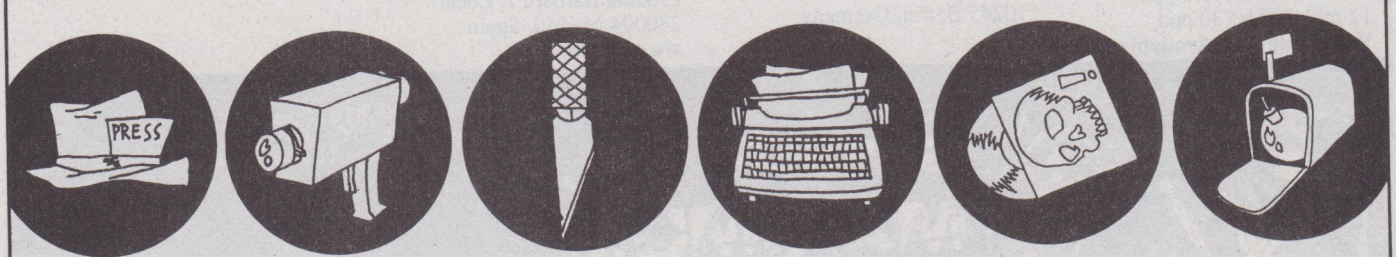

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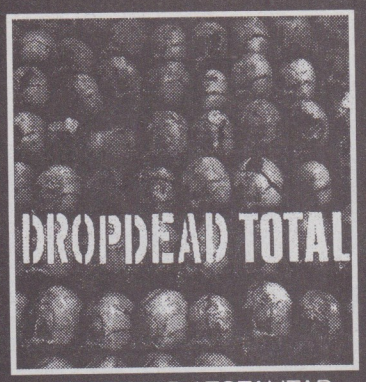

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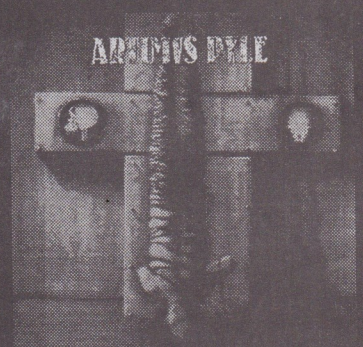

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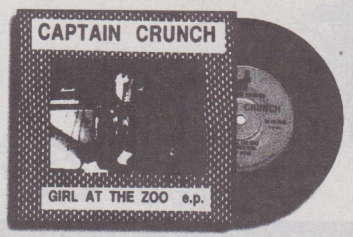

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LETTERS

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MRR & Mike Thorn:
Hey, the green suits finally issued me the big box of *MRR* back issues I went through hell trying to get my claws on it. I swear, they saw the cover of an airplane droppin' bombs (one being the Statue of (false) Liberty) and their brains bled out in a fit of rage at one who would dare question the determined (in King Jr.'s mind... or gluttonous need to shed lifeblood) dismantling of another"enemy," nation by unhinged metal encased malicious entropy painted with stars and the primary colors of the world's rabid dominators. I merely mentioned if the caption "drop 'em on Iraq" was emblazoned on the page they would smile and comment on how "refreshing" it is to see a convicted man embrace the cleansing power of nationalism. Ugh. But, I got them all, after much scrutiny by police microscope lenses looking for "promotions of violence..." Oh, and many grimaces were flown on seeing a picture of The Snobs 7"! Hooraw for artificial protest! So, thanks Mike...

It was pretty cool to get to read of so many great recent tours by exceptional bands in that stack, definitely a great addition to the zine in the last year or so are these diaries. The Vitamin X text had me knee-deep in delight over the descriptions of Felix, G.S.M.F. and driven authentic hordes of youth enraged harrassing the badges at that thrashfest. I think reading the layout of Sir Havoc's house was prize enough! (Serious dude eh?) But the WxHxN? diary was a gift to this prison bunk punk un-drunk... and having also the nerdy pleasure to have a new column of mine in that ish too! I thought they went well together. Oh, somehow I seem to have stumbled upon something, because of my "Multiple Tasking..." column I've gotten a slough of new pen-friends, and a handful are teenish punk gurls who think I'm really cool... now imagine if I was thee ol' drummer boy to the classic MDC. But I'm not... so groupies stress me out! I'm just kidding... I mean come on, prison punx are irresistible!

Enough goofin' off, much gratitude to the *MRR* gang for once again allowing a young brother the forum to discuss his thoughts and in the process connect connect with a lot of new people. And *MRR* readers, thanx for smashing stereotypes and writing to my fag-butt.

Just want to say... freedom is still possible in this global tragedy... stay focussed! And as the hard guys of peace mongering say... "peace + love + more punk songs!"

Oh, and Anonymous Boy and his disgust at products being sold on TV through "humorous" homophobia makes me sooo glad I'm not one of those Will and Grace sham-fags! Fuck fag jokes... instead simply fag-fuck kisses... all bicurious please do write for entry-level inquires! How do you use a SHARPIE? The uncurbed Neil of *Wiener Society 'Zine*
Neil Edgar K61832,
A3-246, PO Box 409000, Ione, CA
95640, USA

Dear friends from *MRR*:
Once again, thanx a lot for the review you made about the *Zoop!* I sent. Here's the latest one. I would like to find time to make an English written one but it's nearly impossible because I'm alone day after day working at the fanzine, distro stuffs etc. You know what it's like... I'm always surprised, for ten years that I know *MRR,* of the huge quantity of information you're able to publish! It's simply crazy! Anyway, it's always great to see that you talk about my work with good words and I feel very glad for you. Grr... Sorry for my English... I'd probably rather say that I'm proud to see that you pay interest to *Zoop!*. As now Maloka is distributing your zine in France, it is cheaper to obtain it. They're friends so I will see if it's possible to obtain a couple of *MRR* under some sale or return terms. I don't know if they sell a lot as there's only a minority of people who read in English but anyway, it's cool that a DIY distro now distributes it! Find enclosed some flyers and stuffs to spread around. We're always looking for new penpals and punk activists to celebrate. Maybe you can tell a word about that in your reader's part. We live in a legal squat in Lyon (called Gourbi, it's an autonomous place with collectives and people who are daily living here) and it would be a pleasure to plan concerts for bands who are going to play in France / touring Europe. I also can try to help bands find dates in our country. The only thing we ask is not to ask too much money as we prefer to plan tour in the squat / alternative scene as we're not used to care about bigger stuffs, even if we understand that bands obviously prefer to play in bigger venues. This is simply not, as an infoshop, the network we're used to working with. I would also be very happy to begin some correspondance with American punkers and alternative persons. It could help make to practice my english. We're OK to invite anyone to our place (very nice country side around, mountains, Switzerland isn't that far south, Italy and Mediterranean neither) because I can't unfortunately can't afford to go to the USA. I really would like, but it's simply impossible to run a DIY activity and to find the money to travel so far! OK, that's all for now. Thanx a lot for informing your reader that I'm looking for correspondents worldwide. Sorry for the mistakes, I type very quickly as I've got tons of people to answer to!
Cheers,
Fluck
3, rue Lazare Carnot
01-000 Bourg-en-Bresse, France
lebokal@free.fr

MRR:
I have been bored and annoyed enough times by your letter column and I guess the most obvious thing for me to do would be to try and write something intelligent. This has to do with Asian punk, more specifically India. I guess maybe I should explain a little bit about myself and why I care about India before I start. My father immigrated to the US from India. I am half Indian and I belong to a name of people that come from a place called Kerala, an Indian communist state. I am just bewildered by the zero presence of India internationally and nationally within the punk community. I am well aware that there is an established network of punk scenes through a large portion of SE Asia, I know that further north there are punks in China. So why don't I ever hear of Indian punks? I can attempt to try and answer this for anyone who cares. I believe it has to do with the extreme class division that exists in

India and the amount of poverty that I see. It seems to me that the only people in India with the capital to buy punk music and the access to punk are those of high wealth. Most likely their knowledge of punk would come from the internet and crappy old MTV, and so would in terms of substance not be discernable from Brittney Spears and Blink 182. So unless these people have a direct western link they would have no knowledge of bands like Infest, Destroy, Life's Halt or bands that have more fame like Black Flag or Minor Threat. The people living in India that are encompassed by the politics of punk rock can scarcely afford electricity, let alone learn english and invest costly interest in punk rock. It's funny though, because I'm sure that if those people ever tried to protest against their government they would probably be massacred as they are so easily replaceable. But anyways maybe I'm wrong and I'm just ignorant about any possible Indian punk scene. If so someone please contact me. Next I would like to talk about the minimal representation of India in your magazine. I realize I am sounding overly PC and annoying, but here's the deal: I know that *MRR* is an American magazine and American politics have more relevance, but the events that are going on in the last couple years in India may be more serious overall. India has been in a nuclear cold war for some time and it seems like nobody cares over here or don't know shit about it. Soon it will have a larger populace than China and I'm sure will have hands down the largest number of homeless and jobless in the world. Already, the largest slum in Asia (possibly the world) exists right outside of Mumbai. And I guess what I'm trying to say is it feels like when it comes to India the country is super double royally fucked, and it doesn't seem like anyone, including any of the punks and anarchists, care at all. And you might think I'm exaggerating, you're probably thinking its not so bad, Tijuana is worse or some other place that you might have seen when you crossed the border, well I'm not exaggerating it has to be seen to be believed. I think I am the only person I know of out of the entire LA, Orange County, and San Diego punk community with Indian blood. I know there has to be more, we are not such a small minority that we do not have a voice in this community. Punks of Indian descent please contact me, I wanna know that we exist outside of mathlabs, cabs, hospitals, and 7-11's. Thanx for your time,
Amarchron Shakti

Dear *MRR* readers:
Yesterday, a good friend of mine, Gary Hall, was jumped on and beat down by officers here at Standish Max. Correctional Facility in Michigan. He suffered a large, serious head wound, bruised rib, and a severely sprained wrist. He open-hand slapped an officer that had previously lied and set him up to go to segregation. The main abusive officer was Collier, who is 6'3" and 265 lbs. of brute muscle. He slammed my friend on the floor, stomped on his head with his booted foot, punched him several times, and wrenched his wrist after he had already been hand-cuffed. It was an open and shut case of excessive force, but will any negative repercussions be handed down to this brutal thug? Fuck no! He will probably get a promotion.

Collier has a very, very long history of violent behavior. Within his ten years of working for the MDOC, he has been cited for at least fifteen assaults on prisoners. He choked a prisoner out, he jumped on and beat a prisoner with another officer and broke his jaw (requiring him to be on a liquid diet for three weeks) He has tackled and repeatedly punched several prisoners while breaking up fights, or simply escorting them to segregation, and he has opened segregation prisoners' doors with no warning, and went in their cells and beat them down like he was in bar fights. Two years ago, Collier was charged with a felony, assault with intent to do great bodily harm less than murder, for beating someone down in the free world. Numerous corrections officials testified on his behalf, extolling his "professionalism" and "ethical standards" and the charge was reduced to a misdemeanor assault, so that he could keep his job as a violent, brutal, corrupt thug.

Many people try to paint prison abusers as racist. Not so. Collier is Black, and his victims have been black, white, and Latino. He is a corrections officer; we are convicts. He will continue to assault and maim us, because he isn't held accountable for his actions. Nothing will change until tax payers, and friends and families of prisoners, demand a change.

Contact your state and U.S. Congress members, join a prisoner help group, or try to find and assist prisoners trying to make a change from the inside. Only by pressure from outside individuals will a change occur.

My friend, Gary, is chained to his bed like a dog right now. Don't let him struggle on alone.

If you would like to learn more about this environment, or how to help stop the prison industrial complex, write to me at:
William Migala #213215
SMCF, 4713 W. M-61
Standish, MI 48658

Hello *Maximumrocknroll:*
This letter is from a country called the Republic of Belarus (or simply Belarus) and I hope it came to you. Our country is part of ex-USSR and I think you have heard about it. My name is Dmeetry (or Deema) and I am from Minsk, the capital of Belarus. I've gotten information about your 'zine from the band Naive (I'm sure you remember that band from Moscow) about three to four years ago, but decided to write only now. The reason of that letter is lack of good level DIY (and not only DIY) production. Belarusian DIY activity stopped to impress me after having a chance to see and listen to Western European and U.S. 'zines and bands. Our DIY makers only talk about it, but don't try to do anything and develop something. And moreover, I personally know most of them, so it's not informative, but it depends. I wanted to know if you make some compilations or release albums nowadays, 'cause I want to send you a record of the band I play in. Sorry for bad English and mistakes.
P.S. This letter is short because of my bad knowledge of English. I wanted to write more but... but I hope you'll understand me. Good Luck! Bye!
Deema
220073, Belarus, Minsk
Prityts kogostr., 18-2-27

MRR:
This is in response to Jake Filth's review of Grimple's *Up Your Ass* LP, which was recently rereleased by Ken at Prank Records. I, and the band, think Jake should have stuck to the record review and not judged us personally as he sees us today. I thought punk was doing, dressing, and being however the fuck you want to be. We saw Filth in New Mexico for the first time in 1989-90. Fuckin sick. The whole band was cool as fuck, Jake especially. We (Grimple) looked up to him. Once we moved to the Bay Area, we were stoked to become friends with that guy, and we endured some crazy parties and times together. We as a band never said anything but good things about Jake Filth. He moved to our hometown (Santa Fe, NM) for a few years. He came back to Oakland and found that we had washed our clothes, got jobs that pay, had children, and were still playing brutal fucking music, just a little more metal. I am not taking anything away from the guy, but I have to question his friendship. He was a role model when we were young punx, but I wonder how long he has felt this way about us? Is he shaking our hands and hugging us, but at the same time thinking we are beneath him? Our families love us, so fuck Jake Filth and others who want to pass judgement on Grimple. "Living, Breathing, Fucking, and Shitting, Law of

Life, Do As Thy Will, No Orders No Borders No Fucking Commands, My Body My Mind, My Choice To Conceal."
Pat Grimple

Dear *MRR*:
In issue 238 "someone who knows" gives us a lesson on identifying and avoiding racist bands and their sympathizers. He ends his letter with the statement, "...any kind of patriotism is fucking mongoloid anyway." Well, "someone who knows," do you mean to blame patriotism on people of Asian descent? Or perhaps you are comparing the horrifyingly deadly stupidity of nazis to the intelligence of people who suffer from an unfortunate congenital condition? Next time you plan on insulting someone I suggest you use a term that doesn't put innocent people down based on their race or physical condition. Maybe you could use the word idiot. Here's an example to get you started: You, "someone who knows," are an idiot. By the way, before Rob Coons and the Gilman crowd get too hyped on Nunslaughter you might want to know that they did a split 7" and a tour with Centinex. On Centinex's 10" picture disc there is a song that mentions just how much the band loves to beat up gays. I'm not going to bother to further investigate these matters, but it would seem that Nunslaughter, at the very least, is guilty of looking the other way.
Humberto Sanchez

Dear *MRR*/Anonymous Boy:
Just read your article in #236. This is really great work and vitally important information and ideas to get out there. Despite the number of idiots or self-destructive types (who don't blink to take others with them), who ignore messages of wisdom—there are those that do hear, learn, and change. Thanks and props for doing something to effect positive behavioral trends. Thanks for the help.
Sincerely,
Garry Erwin

Dear *MRR:*
My name is Roger, and I live near Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Our scene is not the best in the world. It is dominated by tough-guy hardcore kids, and we only get truly good shows that come around maybe once or twice a month. What really bugs me is that there are absolutely no good stores for DIY music. There are I think three independent music stores in our nation's capital that I can think of off the top of my head. Two of them just have classic rock and shitty Epitaph punk, and the other only stocks hardcore/grind from Relapse Records which is OK, but expensive and not nearly covering the whole world of music out there. I do lots of mail-order, but it can get annoying... Anyway, this march I'm going to Panama City Beach, Florida, and it will be my first time out of Canada or even six hours away from home. I was wondering if anyone there is familiar with that area and could give me some tips on where to shop for music. If so, it would be greatly appreciated. Keep up the good work.
Sincerely,
Roger Nutbey

Dear *MRR:*
I'd like to say a little about the D.C., northern Virginia area. Maybe I'm ignorant of what I see around here, but I don't think it's much. For such a big, populated area there isn't that much. A lot of the punk around here consists of "Hot Topic" wearin, Rancid hoodies, and big greasy mohawks that show they listen to the Casualties. D.C. has a lot of commercial clubs that play shitty bands like Anti-Flag, NOFX, or whatever new MTV band that comes around. Dead Kennedy's and The Misfits have come around, that was pretty decent, and The Goons are a decent local band. Most local bands aren't good at all. And DIY doesn't exist for people around here, and I think my parents would rather let me shit on the carpet than set up a show. Legendary bands like Gov't. Issue, Minor Threat, Fugazi, and Bad Brains have been shamed by D.C, natives Good Charlotte. Record Stores are rare, but there is Smash! records. Every time I go there I'm scared of getting my ass kicked by the Banana Republic bag-boys next door. You could tell there's not much here by looking at any band's tour dates, D.C. area will never be on it.

Contact me if you disagree or would like to set up a show. I would love to help, but I'm still fifteen. I would also like to comment on Reagan SS, and that joke of them being Nazis, well lighten up, this is *MRR* not *Rolling Stone*. Sincerely,
Sherwin Shokraei
SSHSIRP123@aol.com

Karl Bakla of Las Vegas:
I was reading through last month's issue of *MRR* (Feb '03) and I came across your letter ranting about some guy ripping you off. What fucking luck?! I thought I lost contact with your punk rock ass! Guess who? It's fucken Muddle!
The last time I saw you or even talked with you was in Las Vegas at your wedding! (Remember when Jay ate that cockroach?!!) Shit, I lost your phone numbers and you never responded to your Fugazine emails. Anyways, I thought I'd write and hopefully *MRR*'s printed this in order for you to contact me! Right now I'm fucking incarcerated in one of California's many lame correctional facility prisons. I should be out soon though. A lot has happened since we last talked and it'd be good to hear from you. We still have to start a band together asshole and I still want that GG poster! Write me!
R.M. - T72172
A4-25, G.S. Mccf
PO Box 1577
McFarland, CA 93250

MRR:
My name is Jesse. I signed up on the punk rock and roll roster when I was twelve. That was 1982. "Prime time," so to speak. At the time I was naive. I was young and perhaps unprepared in a way for what I was about to discover; I had been raised on George Harrison, the Byrds, and the rest. Ad nauseum, I might add. My parents were enthusiasts (which, by the way, I only grew to appreciate when I got to college and was able to pawn off their originals of the *White Album*, Lynrd Skynrd, or however the fuck they like to spell it, and a few others —all of whom I like to refer to as "drinks are on me tonight").

I'm from DC. I toured with my band, 555, for a long time before surrendering recently to the family life (happily) with my wife and son. But what I did out on the road was no more and no less important than what all the fuckers out on the road are doing right now for the sake of ROCK N MOTHERFUCKIN ROLL. My point is this: I'm thirty-two years old (young, by punk rock standards), and I can't figure out where it all went wrong. We had it, man. Sonic Youth? What the fuck do kids today know about that? Sonic elderly. Pailhead? No. At best, Fugazi. I'm sure you get mail like this all the time, but I swear to god I was watching MTV today for the first time in a LONG time tonight and I saw something called "Puddle of Mudd" and some Sublime ripoff also by No Doubt. Then, as if that's not enough, I bore witness to—I hope you're sitting down—a rock video featuring Kid "Rock" and Sheryl Crowe. So now, imagine what I've just seen. Imagine, if you will, that I just got here from some far-away place:

ROCK = degenerative art form.

ROCK = ever changing vicisitude (and I'm not talking about Moby or any fucking DJ culture bullshit. I'm talking about sweat and guitars and drums. In that order, arguably). My whole point, anyway, is why, with all the good shit out there, are we still tuning in to this shit. I mean, I'm ashamed to admit that even Motley Crue and the like was better than the Strokes-type bands. At least they

were real. Help us. Help us. John Mayer needs to be... well, we all know the repercussions of interstate death threats these days, but suffices to say that you peeps got the power. Do it, man. Now is the time.

Seriously, can you recall a darker period in rock (or any) music history? Fuck *Rolling Stone* and the rest. Now is the time. Or never. I would like to help you take over the world. And there are many like me.
Jesse Boone

Dear *MRR:*
Just another letter to say "keep up the good work." I've been into punk since I was thirteen in 1978, and done fanzines and newsletters since 1983. (My 20 year celebration issue of *Have A Good Laugh* featuring huge interviews with Superyob and Oi Polloi will be out in May, priced $4 air ppd, and the first 100 punters get a free 25 track street punk sampler CD—from address below.)

MRR is unique in many ways, as many other big mags are either too arrogant to allow different forms of music to be covered, too "big business minded" to allow small classified ads and letters from their punters (who are let's face it, are the most important people in punk rock, for without the punters there would be no records, gigs, etc) and sometimes (mentioning no names—*Hit List*!) thought themselves "above" reviewing small label bands (the Barse CD I sent them never appeared, maybe if I took out full page ads...) Meanwhile the closest UK equivalents of *MRR* (*Fracture* and *Reason To Believe*) have all but outlawed punk in its original form—I'm talking the stuff that first got me into punk, the '77 gear with the great sing-along choruses, where no band aped another. Both of these mags seem to have a policy whereby anything that isn't Emo or HC (*Fracture*), or HC (*Reason to Believe*) must be ridiculed. Now I know I'm not very open minded musically—in fact I can only listen to '77 style/street punk/Oi! bands (but note that I only listen to new bands) but if I had the time to put out such a mag, I would be embarrassed to fuck if I was high and mighty enough to only allow one form of music. This is another reason why *MRR* is unbeatable—despite the editors being into "shout shout" music, they are fair enough to let people like Bruce Roehrs and Tim Brooks cater for us music lovers, and in doing so, are keeping *MRR* from being a one trick pony.

How you manage to put out something this size every month with so much reading in I'll never know, but I thought I'd let you know you're not being taken for granted. Never give up! But can I make one small suggestion—that you could invite labels to say whether they trade when sending in review material, then you could print "TR" after the review so that small distributors (or other labels) like myself don't waste our time and money contacting someone who turns out to be a subdivision of some huge label or Mordam World Domination Exclusive Contract lucrative set up who would never deal with the likes of us in a million years!
Cheers!
Trev
Rosehill
20 New Front St.
Tanfield Lea, Co.Durham
DH9 9LY
England
P.S. Labels contact me for small trades—I have Ltd Harry May Oi! 7"s, Step 1 CDs, old Knockout stuff, Barse 1st CD and many more. E-mail trevhag@hotmail.com for details

Hey *Maximummrocknroll*-ers:
In reply to Felix Havoc's interesting article about CDs being bogus like condoms—I would like to say that CDs, like tapes, give artists way less expensive control to learn how to manufacture their music themselves in a much better format of audio quality and capability, and CDs don't contain polyvinyl chloride in them as far as I know. If anyone wants to claim that records don't, I would be curious to see proof. It seems to me that records are a waste of space and resources and are also toxic. There is a book that you can check out from the library about keeping toxic chemicals out of your household. Most people don't know that polyvinyl chloride is a top- ranking toxic chemical. I feel sorry for the collectors of vintage used records who have these things sitting and rotting in their sleeves. I see hope for CDrs actually. First of all, CDRs make it easier for bands to do things themselves. Also, CDrs are easier to manufacture than tapes. I agree with what Felix is saying about CDs being less expensive. They definitely should be. We also should support new ways of packaging CDs because it gives artists more DIY control over their music. If anyone would like to prove that CDs are more toxic than records, please do so and I will shut up forever. Oh, please wear a condom if you must fuck, better yet, consider not fucking. Since when was the punk movement ever about fucking anyways? Also, if a label can afford to make CDs and records, are they really a punk label or are they just another rock and roll or pop label? Long live *Maximumrocknroll,*
Just another vegan straight edge person,
Joey First
Mediattack! CDs

Dear *MRR,*
I've been wanting to do this for a while. Well, I've finally been pushed over the edge!I've been an avid reader of *MRR* since I was 13. I am now 22, and continue to enjoy it! One of my favorite sections is the "Classified." One thing I have always loved about the punk "scene" was people willingness to communicate no matter where they were from. I love writing letters and receiving them. It can be a very personal experience. Everyone writes and speaks differently, it's a form of art. However now, at the end of every article all you see is "Bla-bla.com." People have become so enveloped in the laziness and supposed security of their plastic computer worlds. Corperate owned and operated! I would rather buy a stamp and support a public union such as the post office than support a tech-head at IBM or Microsoft. People are becoming seclusive and distrustful by the moment. Let's leave our punk communications open and personal. Instead of hiding behind a corporate computer screen!
Peace,
Chad Beverlin
#424-439
PO Box 8107
Mansfield, OH
44901

Hi Arwen/*MRR:*
I know you're probably busy, so I'll keep this as brief as possible...The *MRR* music library has become more than a mere record collection. It has, due to its lengthy existence, become a chronology of punk rock itself; a repository of alternative music from around the globe for over two decades. The problem is, as a "library," the *MRR* collection stinks. Its contents are unaccessible to the vast majority of punks and its treasures are vaulted away for all eternity. Of course, I realize that there's a reason for this. As much as I hate to admit it, there are a lot of dishonest and unscrupulous punks out there, and I can only imagine the carnage that would result if the library was opened to the public at large. Which finally brings me to my suggestion. I propose that once a week, an item from the library be ripped, encoded in MP3 format, and posted on the *MRR* website in its entirety. It's a quick and simple task, and a month's worth of postings could be created in one afternoon. Of course newer releases would not be posted, nor would anything by actively recording and touring acts be posted (not trying to step on anyone's toes). I feel that the benefits of this would be many. It could give exposure to underrated and underappreciated bands and their music. It would make the *MRR*

archives available to anyone with an internet connection; that in turn could foster a greater sense of community and personal connection with the beast known as *MRR*. Finally, it would be a good way to give the middle finger to the EBay collector types who have taken our scene and our music and turned it into a lucrative business, commodifying it and selling it to the highest bidder. Anyway, that's my idea. Hope you don't think it's too corny. I'd love to take on the task myself, but being that I'm in Iowa creates a small logistical problem. Thanks for reading and keep up the good work with *MRR*.

I've been reading it now for fifteen years and I hope to continue for another fifteen.
Jeff

MRR:

Brian from Grand Theft Audio here with a message to the general punk public about the band Demob who had publicly spread falsehoods about their agreements with GTA, questioned our reputation, and basically messed GTA around. Though I had held off telling my story in *MRR*, I was left without much choice as the band have forced my hand by going around behind my back to set up illegal deals for the same material without notifying the other labels of their pre existing agreement with GTA, thus placing any label who released the same material in legal hot water (Something Andy now claims he will no longer do.)

Back in May of 2001 after much searching I located ex-Demob member Terry (I have always dealt directly with the bands to make sure they get money and have final approval.) Terry had been out of the punk scene for almost 20 years and had no knowledge of there being any interest in Demob outside the area. Terry as well as Mark and John soon agreed on GTA reissuing their old material, and a contract was signed. Because of my encouragement Terry now decided to reform Demob. I had wanted the recording line up but Terry told me that John Melfah the drummer and vocalist Mark were not up to it. Eventually Terry put together a line up which included a new bassist and drummer along with their original vocalist Andy, whom I knew nothing about, but was told had been replaced before they had recorded. I was then told that besides the old recordings, they would be recording six new tracks for me. Doing numerous things to push Demob, I had also secured them a slot for Holidays In The Sun in Blackpool. By early 2002 Demob would start pulling some rather uncool moves as unbeknownst to me, though I would find out through friends, Andy had gone behind my back with Terry's consent to try to release material signed and promised to me on another label, Upstart Productions(it should be noted that the band kept acting like things were still on as planned). I contacted Josh from Upstart and he turned out to be a good guy, removing himself from the project. It seems they were telling Josh that i was a flake (funny that Terry said the same of Josh but the truth was that Josh had not been flaking on them either) and was making no attempts to complete the project, all completely untrue. I found out the reason they had done this was that they were afraid that their CD would not be out in time for Holidays In The Sun, the extreme irony being that because of me they had reformed, were playing Holidays In The Sun, and the only people dragging their feet on the project were Demob. I contacted Terry and Andy and received these two apologetic responses in April of 2002.

"Hi Brian

Can I put things straight, I am aware of how busy running a company is , I manage a service for the community where I live and it is very demanding for me, so I can imagine what you are doing with all the projects from around the world. I am extremely grateful for all your time and effort you have been putting into Demob and I apologies if Andy or I have made you feel we insulted you integrity as a professional in the music industry. I will speak to Andy about this tonight after work. I did try to explain to you that Andy is like a loose canon, this can sometimes be misinterpreted by the person he is in communication with. He's the type of person who likes to see things done yesterday. I reiterate I am sorry if you have been offended and do hope we can continue with the support and help for GTA that has help get Demob on the road again.
Regards
Terry"

"Hi Brian

First of all thanks again for the call, appreciate the personal contact; I want to clear the air with you after speaking to Josh and Terry. I have always been someone who gets on top of a job and sees it through because I believe it needs to be done, I did all the chasing when DEMOB first formed back in 1979, and I'm doing the same again this time around, also with a family in hand. It's just a pity that we never had personnal contact earlier, I'm sure that we could of got this wrapped up by now. I do not doubt your credentials, and your track record speaks for itself.

We have decided to go back to the original plan and let you put this thing together, the only condition we are stipulating is that the CD be ready for Holidays In The Sun, UK. Let me know in due course what you want me to do so we can get things moving, we have to turn this crawl into a rampant Buffalo with his balls just chopped off, go for it Brian.
Oi Punks Later
Andy K DEMOB"

Both members also apologized over the phone with Andy saying that Terry is someone who does not always get things done and if he had been put in charge none of this would have happened (ironically I had previously contacted Andy but he never responded). I stressed that if they wanted things to continue with me that they had to start co-operating to get this done as originally intended otherwise I would release them from their contract before anymore of my time or money was wasted. I was assured I should proceed as originally planned. Demob would never see their CD out in time for Holidays In The Sun because every time I asked them about photos, etc to complete the CD I was led in circles. Next thing I knew they now no longer wanted me to have any new recordings. Andy clearly stated that they had absolutely no interest in the old recordings that him and the two new members did not appear on, telling me to deal with Terry because the other members had no interest or say on that material. Terry agreed to go ahead and honour releasing the old material on GTA. I was not happy with them breaking their agreement to supply new recordings but figured if they honoured the rest of the agreement to give the old material exclusively to GTA then I was possibly willing to overlook their transgression.

Soon though I was told that the other members were complaining to Terry that they now wanted rights to the old recordings that they never appeared on. I called Andy and he informed me that they would be releasing both the old material that Terry had signed over exclusively to GTA along with the new material and there was nothing I could do about it because his decision was final. When I asked him why he had gone back on every agreement he had made, his response was basically that he was "looking out for the band."
He then told me that I had not done much for the band but that we could still be friends. At this point I had spent alot of money/time on Demob, and now felt they were trying to brush me aside. I contacted Adi from Punknite/NY Rel-X (along with other US booking people) to let them know that I was contacting the proper authorities to make sure that any US Demob tour would not happen. Adi contacted Andy to inform him that any tour plans were now on hold unless they could work things out with me. Andy then published my email on the Punk and Oi in the UK website without an explanation trying to make me look like some sort of irra-

tional person out to harm the group for no readily discernible reason to build up public pressure against my actions. Once my side of things was also published on the site next to their's, Andy gave a response stating that they never intended to give me the material exclusively and that he never tried to cut me out, which was totally untrue. Next the band started saying that I only had the rights to release the material in the USA, Japan, and Europe, and then that changed yet again, as if they could change the terms of the agreement whenever the mood hit them, which is not only illegal but is also unethical. Then vocalist Andy sent me an email in an attempt to make it look like they were fully co-operating and that things had resumed on a friendly basis between us, forwarding said email to other people on his mailing list such as Adi/Punknite. The bottom line though was that nothing had resumed on a friendly basis and the band were still ignoring their obligations to GTA.

A friend of mine happened to run into ex-Demob bassist Andy Jones, informing him of our problems. I called Andy Jones who agreed with me that what Andy Kanonik and Terry had done was wrong and he would have a word with vocalist Kanonik. (It should be noted that Andy Jones has continously told them to just apologize and buy out their contract.) I was told by Andy Jones that Kanonik wanted to clear things up. When I called Andy Kanonik he expressed great remorse for the way things had gone sour, said that they the band were fully to blame and were wrong to break agreements. He also agreed that a public apology from the band to me was in order as well as them reimbursing me for my time/expenses on things like artwork, phone calls, so we could go our separate ways. Unfortunately I received an email several days later from Andy claiming they were only a small band in it for punk not the money, that I owed them an apology, should have paid them a "monetary advance as most labels do," were happy for me to release their CD, and that i was trying to interfere with people enjoying their music for my own "financial gain." Of course I will point out that while the band was stating they wanted me to release their material their actions proved otherwise as they had knowingly contacted some of my distributors in an attempt to takeover my distribution on this release as the band must have thought my distributors would bypass me to do business with Demob. This was directly the opposite of what Demob were claiming on their website, which was that they would not try to contact my distributors to sell their CD. As well Demob complained on their website that i was frightening off distributors who wanted to deal with Demob. The truth was Demob are obscure footnotes and many distributors do not want to deal with a label with only one small release, that is priced around $12.00 wholesale for a 28 minute DIY CD (their mailorder price is $18.00 in the UK and $22.00 for the US, where Demob previously had claimed they would not try to sell the CD though it should be noted that in the last couple of days Andy has removed the negative comments regarding GTA). They complained that they never got an advance but the truth is they were offered and were going to get a royalty advance plus money for studio time to record new tracks but they kept messing me around. So now was I supposed to give them an advance and possibly lose that too !?! Besides would they know what "most companies do?" Simply, they did not know. The most disappointing comment of all was Demob's claim that its only about punk rock and that I was interfering with musicians to keep people from enjoying music for my own financial gain, which most people would note is not quite accurate since I tend to go after some rather commercially unsound and completely obscure punk music. GTA will still be releasing a superior CD of Demob material which will contain alot more music and a larger info booklet. Recently Andy and I myself had a somewhat hated email exchange after which he offered once again to make a public apology as well as buy out of their contract.

After many days had gone by I heard from Andy again stating that he had failed to convince the other members to buy out of the contract. He then over the course of several emails profusely apologized for any of his actions or words that were hurtful towards myself and GTA. Furthermore he stated he would fully honour and cooperate with our agreement though no word on any of this from Terry who had a large part in the mess. As it stands now Andy of Demob says he will not try to cut any illegal deals of their material behind my back but of course like anything else that remains to be seen. Sorry to everyone for having to bore you with these proceedings but Demob had left me no choice with their actions as well as bringing our feud out into the public.
Bryan GTA

Dear *MRR:*
Fuck man, I just got back from this show here with The Puke Boys and I Am The Fly, and all I can say is—what the fuck is wrong with kids today!? I mean fuck back when I started going to shows back in '94 shit was so much different—now all these new kids come around and none of them know how to dress, dance nor hold down their booze. The only good part was been Myke Hunt from I Am The Fly dumped a cup of coffee on this posuer who kept on trying to sing along—I nearly pissed myself laughing about it. Fuk'n dumbass... Other than that it was a complete shit evening... fuck I forgot my point... Too drunk to care at this point at least... Anyways keep up the good work as always.
Jason Felcher
1853 4th St.
Bartlett, TN
PS. I think you should give Floyd a column—his advice on the Fat Wreck website has really helped me through some hardtimes.

Dear *MRR*:
I hate cops. Let me tell you why. So me and my pals were hanging out in the alley behind the 7 Eleven here in Rossford, Ohio—just minding our own business drinking 40's and having a good time smashing glass bottles, when these fucking pigs rolled up and put an end to our good time. What the fuck right? I mean we were just minding our own business, listening to Life's Halt on our boom box, drinking and having a good time—and next thing you know they's got my friend Jason Puke in a headlock! All he did was call them a buncha fucking pricks! Fuck the cops! This police reppression has got to stop! Up the punx!
Ryan Heath
1296 Front St.
Rossford, Ohio 43552

MRR:
Long time reader first time writer. Ok so I gots a bone to pick. This one time you gave my band a bad review—and I was like OK fine whatever, it happens. But then you gave my zine a bad review too—what's up with that? "Generic?!" What's so generic about stories about traveling, drinking, and interviews with bands? This kind of shit would have never happened if Tim were still alive! You suck, but I still secretly am in love with you.
Ian Moter
PS. Arwen Curry writes the best reviews—he is honest and knows his shit. Fuck Mike Thorne, he seems like some kinda fag or something.

MRR:
Regarding Dave Hyde's letter about mohawks. Fuck You. Why don't you go listen to fucking Green Day or Kill The Man Who Questions, you pussy.
Love,
Iowa City Punx

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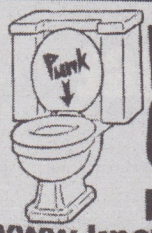

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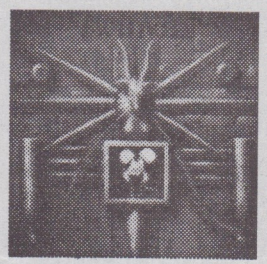

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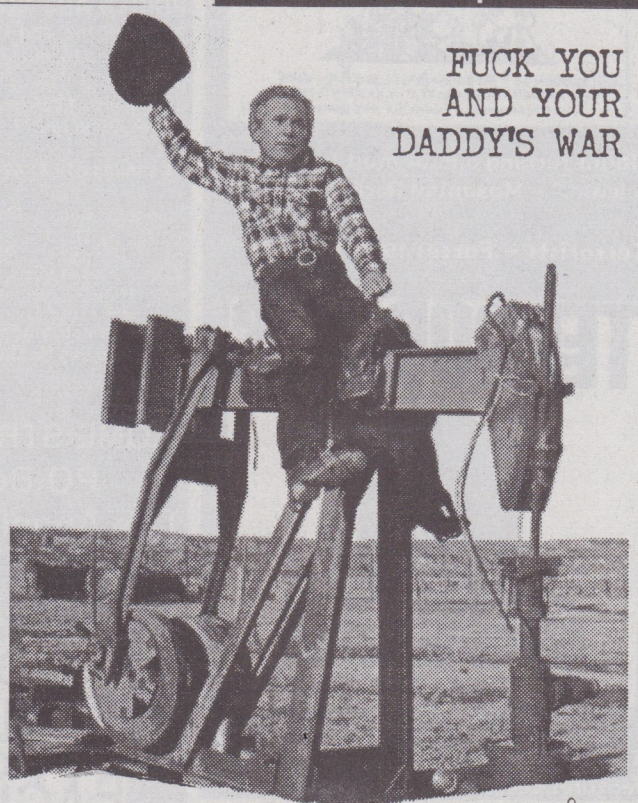

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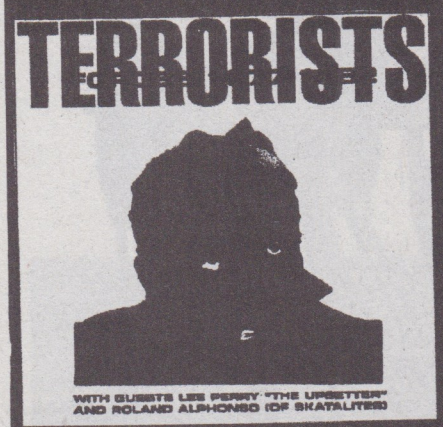

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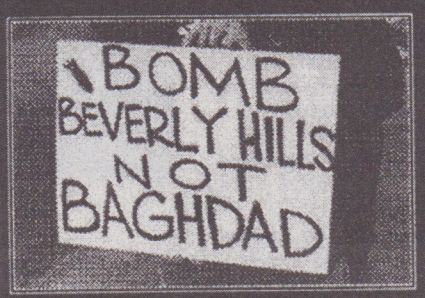

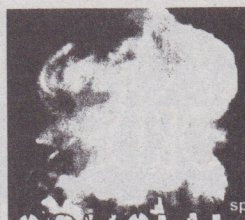

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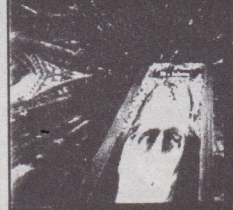

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COLUMNS

In the last issue of *Slug & Lettuce* I wrote about rediscovering old bands. About digging out old records and making new tapes and about how crucial those good mix tapes have always been. I listed off a few bands and that list has been sticking around in my head—seemingly incomplete and just not good enough. I listed off Dead and Gone, Still Life, and Gag Order. Then last night I read a review of a new Dead and Gone record. I had no idea they were still together. And Erik reminded me about playing with Still Life just a few years ago. And I saw a Gag Order 7" in the used bin at the local record shop. Of course I wanted to buy it, but I already have it. And if I were to buy it and hoard it, that only prevents someone else from discovering it. The question is—will someone else pick it up and love it as much as me? There are so many old records that no one recognizes, or even knows who the bands are. There are those dedicated to sitting on the floor and going through bins—playing the ones that pique their interest. But I've always been amazed that I find these records neglected in the used bins; records I love, that make me jump when I see them. But I have to remind myself and remember that I already have a copy.

I listed off Samhain, Nausea, and the English Dogs. When in fact they are not lost, 'cause I have never stopped listening to those bands. I did forget about Danzig and I dragged out the first LP and was reminded how much I liked that record an how important that record was in 1989. The Misfits? I never really cared that much about them. I saw a sad excuse for a reunion show recently and while there were about 15 minutes where I thought it was kinda cool to hear these old classics and think about the impact that this band has had on so many; ultimately all I could think about was how much I didn't want to listen to the Misfits and how much more I liked Samhain.

I can't get enough of Venom lately. The song "Countless Bathory" in particular.

And Nausea. Well I never stopped listening to Nausea. They're probably one of the most important bands to me in my life of punk rock. They were a band that introduced me to new ideas, politics and philosophies and it was all happening right then and there as opposed to two, five, or ten years in the past like so many of the other old UK Punk and peace punk bands that I was also into. Nausea marked my New York years in the early 90s and when I listen to them now, at certain times—all I can think is about how much of an influence this band had on me and how the words that I know ring clear in my head. When I hear, "Dogs forced to smoke your cigarettes, monkey's suffer electrical shock" I remember just how much that really got through to me, of what an impact this band had on me, of learning about animal rights and animal suffering through medical testing, and so much more. And also of how inspirational it was to see a great band with a woman singing. Words can not convey how important that was to me, then and now.

And the English Dogs... well they have never stopped being a favorite of mine and never will. I like the punky punky stuff and I like the epic metal concept record. I like it all and have made them a soundtrack to many long drives and drunken late nights. I used to put one ear to the speaker trying to understand the words and now I'm dragging out the records for anyone who wants to hear them. We're talking about those all time favorite bands—the ones that easily make the "desert island" lists and all time favorite lists and all that.

It's the rediscovery of bands almost forgotten that are even more fun. The one record by a band that I filed away and haven't listened to in X amount of years, but when I do, I seem to know every note. That is the kind of thing that I'm excited about. And one band leads to remembering another. Sometimes I have a terrible time remembering what I records I actually have or the titles of the records a favorite band has done. It's common for me to hear something that I love and know well, but not be able to identify it. Sometimes it makes hearing it again all the more exciting as I have to flow through the mental rolodex. But once the frustration passes, and when I figure out what it is or who it is, it's like rediscovering a band all over again. SSD, Warning, Wrecking Crew—there are so many.

Part 2

I never really understood why people would stop doing a zine and then change the name and start from scratch. But I think I've come to understand that sometimes the expectations people put on something can become too much. Sometimes we need a change of pace. A clean slate. The ability to find a new voice. To say something new and unexpected—it can be easier in a new forum.

I have never considered myself a writer. It's just something that I started doing. I've always written in an open and honest way 'cause it's really all that I know. I've always been somewhat envious of those who can write so openly that they really bare their soul. Likewise I've always been in awe of those who can tell a true story but change it enough to make it an example that transcends those people around them. It's a touchy subject, ya know, writing about people you know—writing about your friends, your peers, yourself. You can open up doors that may be best left closed. Some people like their privacy and anonymity, after all. I'm not much of an agitator. I don't like conflicts, drama, or confrontations. Over the years I have learned a lot about mediation—about seeing multiple sides ('cause there always are multiple points of view)—and attempting to find common ground. I've been learning a bit about privacy issues myself in recent years. Getting to the point of self-censorship—not wanting to tell the world everything and trying to find a way to keep a little bit for myself. Sometimes it's hard, especially when you get used to being very open. To hold something back feels dishonest sometimes. To not really talk about how I feel or what is on my mind can feel like denial, it can also feel like holding back the truth or reality.

I have grappled with this public/private issue in my writing and walked a fine line of what was appropriate. I tend to not write things that are too specific, yet I am unable to change things completely. If I write for the public it's pretty straightforward. But I have found myself battling confidence issues, struggling to find my voice—even harder, to maintain a voice that I got used to—to not show weakness, vulnerability, or uncertainty. Above all—to not be negative or critical when I want to always look on the bright side and find the good in things.

I recently found out that something I wrote over two years ago hurt someone, and that has been weighing heavily on me. It has really made me think about the responsibility that I have in putting my words out there. Unfortunately that has also made my instincts to pull my words deep within me all the stronger. To protect them and keep them from making myself vulnerable or from hurting anyone else. I don't think that this is the right course of action, especially since my intents are never hurtful, but I don't know if I can help it. I have been struggling with words for a while now. Feeling like I have run out of them. Wondering if I will get them back. And really giving thought to the need to put my ideas out there for the world to read. I question myself about the ego involved in thinking that what I have to say is worth reading. I struggle with the confidence to feel that I have something to contribute—words that are worth the paper they are printed on. I do get some good feedback, and that keeps me going. I find that enough people seem relate to the things that I write about;

enough people validate my expressions in one way or another, and that keeps me sharing my thoughts. But I still find myself questioning it and drowning in the self-doubt and insecurity and uncertainty. But I know that we all have our insecurities and sometimes putting our ideas out there can be the hardest, but also the most rewarding thing we can do.

Chris(tine) c/o Slug & Lettuce • PO Box 26632 • Richmond VA 23261-6632

Saturday, December 7

Fresh off my night out trolling for babes—with the success under my studded belt of talking to an actual girl—I strutted my way into Borders Books. I was meeting up with Lubrano. Fuckin' A. Shit was good. I felt good. I had the same clothes on as yesterday, so I knew my outfit was key. I was about a minute and a half from the enigma of Jason Lubrano; a guy who shits his pants almost regularly and can pontificate on talk radio for at least a solid hour. I was smiling about that when I caught sight of her. It was fucking Borders Girl. She was smoking a butt and drinking coffee outside. Not a sighting for months, and there she was, just fucking standing there.

Alright wait, this story might make more sense if I back it up a couple of months. I was online at Borders Books. In my hand was the remastered double disc version of Bowie's *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars*. I was there with my brother and our pal Heath. My brother was compulsively buying filmmaking magazines that he wasn't sure if he had bought and read already. Heath was looking at a smarty-pants book about inequity and race and stuff like that. I was checking out my mug in *MaximumRockNRoll*, trying to figure out why they call that other magazine *Punk Planet*, and buying some Bowie. That was the scene.

So, I was just about to pay when a totally great-looking young woman came up to me. Honestly I was startled. This kind of shit just doesn't happen to me.

"You're name is Wells, right?" she said.

I think I said something as smooth as, "Umm, yeah."

Luckily she took some initiative in explaining just why the fuck she was talking to me.

"Once I snuck up behind you and put my hands over your eyes," she said.

"Really?" I said as I fumbled with a nervous smile. I wracked my fucking brain trying to figure out what she was talking about. But I was coming up blank.

"Yeah, I thought you were Travis, you know that guy, right?" she said.

I did know that guy. Travis Marino. I still had no idea what she was talking about, but at least I knew Travis. He was this dude from a bunch of years back. Once when I first started driving he skitched on the back of my 1986 Saab 900. I got up to around 30 mph before both he and the skateboard went flying in the air and hit the pavement. Later he got a crucified skinhead tattoo and moved to the Midwest or something. I guess we looked alike because about once a month back then, someone would mistake me for Travis. Apparently that's what she did. And now she was talking to me about it. Sweet.

We made small talk. We ran down the list of people we knew in common, and when that ran out of steam, she updated me on Travis. He got married or something. I scrambled and came up with a halfhearted update on this guy Pauly that we both knew.

As mundane as it was, I was smitten. We were all dumbfounded that a pretty girl just marched up to me and started talking. It really was amazing. As sad as it sounds, it fueled our conversation for at least three or four days.

The ensuing month or so was marked by a sharp increase in my Borders patronage. I was buying CDs once or twice a week. Most of the time I was going home with really crummy stuff. I did get a couple of really great SON VOLT CDs though. Anyway, I never fucking really talked to her again. I was in there a lot, and only once do I remember awkwardly starting another conversation with her. It failed, and left me with an enormous walk of shame from her register to the door.

So, about a month and a half into our creepy one-sided stalker relationship, I had had it. I resolved to ask her out the next time I saw her. I didn't care what the answer was. I just needed to know that I could ask. I was sick of being a creep, I was sick of going to Borders, and I was sick of the crummy country music I kept buying. I was so fed up and so dedicated to asking this girl out that I started telling my friends and family about it. There wasn't a person close to me that didn't know that I was going to ask out Borders Girl. Like an idiot, I built that shit up.

So, I went in three or four more times over the next two weeks. She was never there. Or at least I never saw her. I concocted a half crazy idea that she was avoiding me. That's when I got mad and broke off our non-relationship. I'm crazy. I know.

OK, fast forward. It's like two months later. I'm still crazy, just not about Borders Girl. I was rolling up on potential hijinks with Lubrano. I had a spring in my step from a totally great time the night before. My confidence, as stupid as it sounds, was off the charts from a mildly successful conversation with a girl the night before. That's when I saw the elusive Borders Girl sipping on Starbucks and sucking down a butt a few feet to the right of the entrance. Fuckin' A.

About midway across the crosswalk I felt my right arm go up into a wave.

"Hi! How are you?" I said, almost like Daniel Johnston says it.

"Hey," she said with a smile. Then she made a comment about how busy it was.

"You don't look busy," I said, realizing that this conversation was sucking wind already and it was totally my fault.

"Yeah, I'm on a break," she said. I was ready to poke my eyes out when it took a turn for the worse. "That girl with the short blonde hair that you used to come in with was just here."

Great. Stacy. Sweet. "Yeah, we used to go out," I said.

Somehow, almost as if some divinity delivered me from the crap hole that I was in, the conversation started to get better. The pace quickened and we were talking about roommates, apartments, and our jobs and shit. She was smiling. I was about two feet from her and I caught a pretty long look at her face. She was really very beautiful. Actually, she was kind of astounding. I noticed a few things. She was about six inches shorter than me. She had green eyes. And I really didn't like her pants.

She was finishing up a sentence when I sort of squeaked out, "Hey." I took the plunge and continued with, "I used to come in here all the time trying to get the nerve up to ask you out."

"Oh yeah?" she said, kind of smiling.

"Yeah, so do you want to maybe go out sometime?" I said, squinting my face bracing for the answer.

"Yeah, totally," she said.

Holy shit. Not only did I ask this girl out, but she said yes, too. This was unreal. She had some questions about when I worked and I reciprocated. Most of the logistics were out of the way when she busted out with an admission.

"I actually don't have a phone," she said. Fuck.

She continued, "I just moved into a new place and I don't have a phone yet."

I made a crack about how she was making it up, and she laughed. She brought me inside to grab a pen and write down my number. I was standing there waiting for her to get a pen when everything around me became painfully ultra-real. I felt my temples pounding and my stomach churning. I caught a surreal glimpse of her pants again. They were a weird color and had kind of like tassels or frills on them. No, not frills. But like the pocket edges were sort of frayed and had like this mane of denim strings hanging from them. In any case they were weird. I also caught a slow motion shot of her coffee. The lid had "Alison" scribbled on it in pen. I was pretty sure that was her name, but now I knew. Awesome.

I rattled off what I hoped was my cell phone number. I was pretty nervous and not really sure what the fuck number I gave her.

"Wow, I'm glad I got the nerve to ask you out," I said.

"Well, I'm really glad you did," she said with a totally cute smile.

Damn. That was great. So, I was off to find Lubrano. I saw two or three girls on the way to the music section that I thought about asking out too. I was fucking brimming with confidence and enthusiasm. I headed to the DVDs and called Lubrano on his cell. He was by the magazines.

"Dude, you won't guess what the fuck just happened to me,"

I said to the phone.

"Come over to the magazines," the phone said back.

"Fuck that, dude, Borders Girl is over there. Meet me by the DVDs and go fuck yourself," I said to the phone.

Lubrano showed up a minute later. I looked around like a spy about to deliver some kind of secret goods. I put my arm around Lubrano and whispered, "Dude, I just fucking asked out Borders Girl."

I felt like a million bucks. We dicked around in the store for awhile then proceeded to drive around like idiots. Fuckin' A. It was really the first stranger I ever went up to and asked out on a date, and it totally worked. I was happy. Really happy.

Epilogue

It's day four. No call yet. My cell phone rings.

"Hello?" I answer in my best *handsome guy* voice. It's some guy named Carl who's a customer at work.

"Fuck. Fuck. Fuck. Fuck you, Carl. Fuck," I said to him.

That kind of crap went on for a couple of weeks until I totally gave up on her calling me. Defeat, at least I'm used to it.

More Epilogue

Anyway, at some point before Christmas I was at Borders getting some shopping done. Borders Girl comes barreling around a corner and we make this uncomfortable eye contact. She's got some guy in tow looking for a book or something. I was kneeling checking out cookbooks for one of my pals.

She put her hand on my shoulder briefly, and said, "How are you?" She said it in that same consoling way people do at funerals. Fuckin' A. I can't catch a break.

Magazine Rack

Well, what might turn out to be the real story here is this: Borders Girl works at the register about six or eight feet away from the magazine rack where this here *MaximumRockNRoll* will be sitting in a month or so. At this point, it's probably the best argument I can come up with for why *MRR* shouldn't be in chain stores. Fuck. I'm a glutton for humiliation. Bring it on.

***

The Punk Rocker Mental Illness Pen Pal Network is up and running. If you are looking to connect with someone to write back and forth with about Mental Illness, send over your info, and I'll hook you up with a pen pal. The contact information is below.

***

Past "Oh Man What The Fuck!?!??!" columns are no longer available on the web. Look for an anthology zine at some point in the future.

Gave up white bread: Wells Tipley, PO Box 772, East Setauket, NY, 11733 USA. Or email me at wells@traffic violation.com.

***

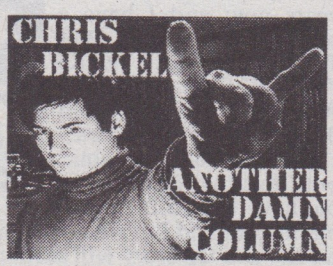
END NOTES:

1. I care about nutrition. I really do. I went to a nutritionist and everything. I'm off the white bread and dairy. I'm off booze and caffeine. I'm off chips and pretzels. I'm off cookies and sugar. I eat lots of salad, fruit, and nuts. And vitamins. And some weird cereal called Uncle Sam's. I care about nutrition.

2. My pal Alex who used to be in MAD COW DIZEAZE 182 finally just got his compilation 12" out. It's called *Death to Hardcore, Death to Reagan* and it's got bands like ULTIMATE WARRIORS, CRUCIAL UNIT, IDOL PUNCH, WHAT HAPPENS NEXT, the GATECRASHERS, and more on it. I do a track with my old two-piece band called the SOCIETY DESTROYERZ. Most of the songs are covers of 80s songs about Reagan. We did an OLD SKULL song.

3. I was in a colossally bad mood for the entire writing of this column. It made it hard to write.

4. Fuck you.



Anarchy is viable, obtainable, and sustainable within our lifetime. Given the chance, the human race would love to work together toward a common cause.

Punk Rock is a serious threat to the status quo. Serious. Threat.

Real Rock is finally making a comeback thanks to bands like the STROKES and the HIVES and the VINES.

I'd like to see a return to the 1984 style violence at shows. More gangs and skinheads! The scene was better when people were scared to go to shows. Only violence can take Punk back from MTV.

Looting punk bands' merch tables will teach them a lesson that Capitalism has nothing to do with Punk Rock. We must teach these fucking vultures that it doesn't pay to leech off the scene!

Fuck the antiwar movement. This country needs a war on three different fronts to boost the economy. A new war will also provide all new material for European crust bands who are desperately running out of ideas.

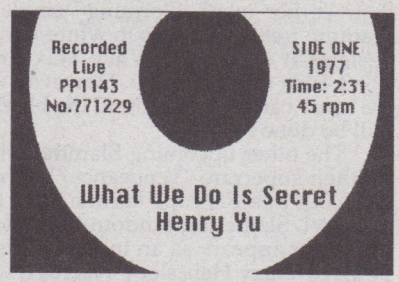
Other than emo, the most relevant genre of Punk Rock has got to be (insert more relevant subgenre here).

Opinions of a political nature should be kept out of music. No one wants to hear a bunch of fucking preaching. A song's message should fall into one of four categories: drinking, fighting, fucking, or rocking. If a song falls outside the scope of those categories, it better be a goddamn instrumental.

Look at the first letter of every paragraph in this column if you are really that unsure of what I'm trying to say. I shouldn't even need to explain this, but then again I've never known how to tell a joke without fucking up the punchline. I'm OK with punch lines, but not punchlines. You know... a joke's never funny when you have to explain it. Voila! I fuck up again!

Sorry for writing such a short column, but I could only say everything I wanted to say in ten short (chimerically bombinating) bursts. Email me at smashismo@aol.com

I'm So Excited



Gulcher Records (gulcherrecords@aol.com) stretches its musical repertoire with the release of the THUNDERTRAIN retrospective "Teenage Suicide". Sorta the US equivalent of UK pub rock, bar boogie rock happily coexisted with proto punk in early to mid-70s. Visually, progenitors of the genre took on long locks, open shirts and tight flares posed by pretty boys with pastiches of glam that were really dreams of big arena rock filtered through low budget camp. Musically, rock star guitar solos and the occasional cowbell framed its high energy hard rock sound.

THUNDERTRAIN did a handfulla years during the era, their demographic extending from the teen girl crowd, as mash letters flooded *16 Magazine*, up through the hip above underground: Max's, CB's, and of course their hometown pad, the Rat in Boston. Their recorded legacy was small but notable, with 1975's independently released "I'm So Excited/Cindy Is A Sleeper" 45 on their pseudo-conglomerately-named United National label, and then the next year with their breakout "Hot For Teacher" 7", whose brilliant title was coopted by Van Halen for their megahit in the 80s. Their one LP, *Teenage Suicide*, extended the name further. Their lead singer Mach Bell later gained further success as lead singer for THE JOE PERRY PROJECT, a one-time splinter from the early 80s AEROSMITH drugs'n'alcohol descent.

This CD not only has their best tracks, but also a radio interview and great liner notes, a 24 pager with rare photos and band history. And it's all told as real as real without the rose colored rock revisionism, even their self-admittedly embarrassing brief foray into face-painted KISS-dom! Definitely a labor of love and a quality package all the way. Barkeep, I'll have another beer...

Postscript to the Mach Bell continuum is his band LAST MAN STANDING who put out their 11 track CD recorded and released a year or two ago. He still looks great and sings even better than his THUNDERTRAIN days. Hard rock without a trace of indie or punk infused is his current gig, would unlikely appeal to fans of this rag, but if you secretly like Bon Jovi style arena boogie, you might want to check it out.

The counterpoint to the thuggery of Bloomington Indiana's GIZMOS and PANICS were embodied in their art damaged counterparts, MX-80 SOUND and the DANCING CIGARETTES. While MX made it to the majors, the Cigs stayed closer to home, tho touring out as far as Buffalo and Omaha. Traces

of skronk, sound pastiches, pained vocals, lurching stops and starts, and song titles like "Monsters Eat My Hell" and "Puppies in a Sack", while obtuse, somehow manage to wash a warm feeling over me, or is it the booze? These guys looked like intellectual hippies with their frizzy hair, but played with an intense edge that finds kin with PERE UBU and their ilk.

"The Gulcher Recordings" collect the Cigs previously recorded output (a 7" EP as well as the great "Broken Windows" track from the Red Snerts compilation – also recently reissued on CD on Gulcher), and a fine sounding live set. Worth getting for the initiated and curious.

Blam Blam

From some scumpit in the US, another motherload of near beer hath been dropped. The same blammer that brought us the EATs and the PLUGZ' 45 repros last year have come forth with more KBD-like madness. Mr. Blam gives us tuff rock in the form of the "Taking The City By Storm" 45, from the band that *didn't* make Milwaukee famous, THE HASKELLS. Originally released in '78, this new wavish looking record, in which the trio sports two striped button down shirts and a polo shirt, is really a hard rockin' punker. Meanwhile, the reissue of the LATIN DOGS' "Warning" 45 outta Michigan, 1981-ish, comes with a different sleeve - a cool live shot in which the kick drum hilariously has a teddy bear (real?) grafted onto it. Another great 45 to reissue. Finally, San Francisco's SNUKY TATE get his due with the reissue of his "Who Cares?" monster platter. Nice sleeve repro on this one.

Sent to me in pre-release form, the GERMS' "Lexicon Devil" EP, originally a Slash records release that quantum leapt from their earlier inept "Forming" single, is one of the upcoming Blammo treats. It comes in white vinyl and a picture sleeve that declares it a "Special White Wax Promo 1 of 50 (copies)", so don't even think about it. However, when it gets fully released, the scum can swarm around the blue wax edition that a portion will be done on.

The other upcoming Blammo release is a reissue of the FIX 45, their superrare "Vengeance/In This Town" 45 that originally came out in a 100 copy edition from the then fledgling Touch & Go label. Slathering fandom in the form of a Ripper magazine interview appears as an insert to this 45, along with a counterpoint by Barry Henssler ("Necros") on another insert, declaring the band as Judas Priest loving outsiders to the scene. Funny as hell, and heck you already know the music, midwest hardcore short and furious. Why pay $800 when you can feel this wax melt in your hand at the few bucks it'll probably be.

Ex-Lax

When I was in college in N.J., the Pennsylvanians were the most boring fucks to walk the earth. Could never figure out why. Three Mile Island fallout mebbe? Always smart but never creative. Certainly never interesting. Lotsa curly haired types of varying shades of brown, usually with misshapen noses. Maybe they had the crap beaten outta them too much. Bastard children of Rocky. Bands like RUIN and RED BUCKETS proved that even the non-mainstream of Pennsylvania weren't much to speak of neither.

It took a number of years for me to dispel those notions. Ordered thru the lamented and long gone distro Ajax Records, I discovered the MONKEY 101 single "French Feelings" on this Philly label Siltbreeze. It was one of my favorite records of that year, 1989. Over the years that ensued, a flurry of decidedly non-pedestrian releases came out on the Siltbreeze label, including notable one-offs by bands like SEBADOH. With other labels like Anyway and Datapanik, it became part of a triumverate of the best new non-grunge American shit.

Fast forward to last month. What the fuck Siltbreeze was doing selling a limey assed pansy goth shit JOY DIVISION record on eBay was question enough, and me bidding on it even more so. Anyhow, the 45 of "Dead Souls b/w Atmosphere on the Sordide Sentimentale was one of the rarest of the Joy Div records in a numbered edition of just over 1500 copies. The fact that Siltrecs (the eBay name for Siltbreeze) billed it as "rare as hen's teeth" further stoked the fires. It had been heavily bootlegged. Copies used to float around readily in the mid-80's around town for about $10, replete with the full color folder reproduced. A genuine copy I bookmarked it. After checking it a few times during the week, I finally decided to put in a bid but not first without jetting Siltrecs a few questions to verify the authenticity of the record.

"Is there a medusa's head on the paper label of the record? I cant quite make out the graphics…", I wrote. The bootleg has a medusa's head. No response from Siltrecs before the auction ended so I bid anyways cos if it was real, I wanted it. With a high bid near $250, I won. I sent him another email.

"…Looks like i won the auction! can you answer the other question i emailed yesterday, which is ,there should be a stamped number of the jacket. what is the number? thanks, henry"

I got this mysterious response that only Ray Ernst would be able to decipher.

"no, it's no (sic) the medusa "repro." it's the other version. up until i listed this item i had no idea there had been reprints. and so it goes... ." What the fuck exactly does that mean, mister indie fucking rock america?

"hi tom, the number should be numbered out of 1578 copies - can you look for a stamped number? thanks,henry." I responded. I tried to be more explicit.

"there is no "stamped" number. at least that i can find.", he responded. OK, I think to myself. I'm getting some English now. As I would find, his English seemed to get better and better, especially of the 4 letter variety.

"hi tom,
is it ok if you give me a day to research where the number should be ? im sorry about doing this now, but i emailed the question yesterday (probably on too short notice). i can't pay this price for the boot, since the boot goes for $75 or so. the info i have on boot is that there is no stamped number and the inner label of the record is a medusa (woman with snakes in her hair)."

"Henry-
listing & dealing w/this record has been a huge pain in my ass. I suppose some of this falls on me as I had no idea that this was a boot or reissue or whatever it is, as it is the only copy I have ever seen. Now you tell me you don't want it."

"hi tom, i did NOT say in my email that i dont intend to honor my bid.i am saying that i want to verify that it is original and not a boot before i buy it, and i wasn't able to verify it before the auction ended. Let me do some research as to how the record was numbered

"henry-this was forwarded to me at the end of the auction. http://members.aol.com/lwtua/S5.htm" OK, this fucker has finally come clean and admitted that this is a bootleg. That is all I needed to know. Thanks, dude.

"so according to this, the copy is a bootleg, i unfortunately cannot honor the bid as such." I said, along with apologies and willingness to make up the diff to the next highest bidder.

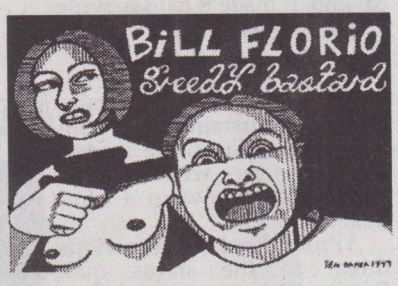
"i'll let you know what transpires w/the 2nd bidder. you *really* fucked this thing up & *after* i told you that is WAS NOT an original!." Ungh.

All I can say is I hope Mr. Lax is more cooler with the bands on his roster than with his eBayers. Glug.

Poor and Forgotten

From the I-promised-to-mention-all-submissions-and-now-I-regret-it department comes a fanzine called *Poor and Forgotten* put out by Matt Johnson from a Massachusetts Correctional Facility. Unsure if it's any good cos all I got was the plea for $1 and two stamps for the "free" copy. Sorry bubs, my stamps are for licking.

Send shit to Henry 4309 23rd St San Francisco, CA 94114. Next month is a pile of releases from Raveup as well as the ballad of Jim Brick and a rave on LOS OLVIDADOS.



Alright folks, I've been writing this column for something like four years now and I have a confession to make, FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS I'VE BEEN A PORN ACTOR. I never talk about it and I'm very embarrassed to make it public, but I feel that certain people have leaked the information out and I'm sure if I don't out myself someone will do it for me and the story will seem much much worse than reality.

Yeah, I live a double-life. By night, I pose as Bill Florio, fun-loving goofy punk kid, but when I roll out of bed to punch a

clock become Craven Moorehead, ball-draining cumshot king. To tell you the truth I never thought it would come to this point, I always sort of thought the whole thing was a joke, I'd do two or three films that no one would know, but lately I've made so much money that it's just too hard to say no when they call.

It all started around 1999, I was working on a *Greedy Bastard* article where I would call people and ask them about their crazy sex experiences. One of the people on the list was my pal Rick Hall in LA. Rick has worked in the porn industry for ten years or so and has been the Managing Editor of *High Society* as well as working at *Hustler,* and he now works for Evil Angel which is a pretty big porn video company. I was in the middle of asking him some goofy question about felching or something like that and confesses that he briefly dated an ex-girlfriend of mine. Suddenly the whole goofy interview got turned around and he started asking me all these embarrassing sex questions. I guess my ex let him in on some of my crazy sex abilities and Rick gets a agent's fee if he happens to find new talent. Of course, this usually means some stripper Rick picks up on, but new worthwhile blood in the Straight Male porn community is always appreciated since guys have to work a lot harder than the girls for less pay.

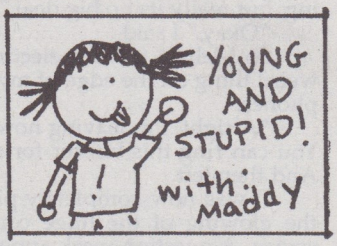
One thing leads to another and I'm sitting in an office in downtown Manhattan waiting for some guy named Larry to interview me. I imagined some greasy-haired guy with a pencil moustache and a cigar asking me to pull my pants down and jerk-off in front of him. He looked nothing like that, but for some reason I still imagined him looking like that after the interview was over. He was actually just a bored office worker type, there wasn't any porn posters hanging up, it sorta looked like an accountant's office rather than some depraved sex center. Larry explained to me that four times a year the company would have a "casting call" for new porn stars. See, in porn they actually hire real union film people as far as camera and lighting engineers, and usually they also rent a sound stage, catering etc., etc... These sort of things get rented by the week and the idea is to do as many films as possible in the three to seven days that they are shooting. Anything or anyone that wastes time costs them money and porn producers are some greedy motherfuckers. So if some stripper comes on and has an anxiety attack or cries when a guy sticks it in her poopie pot, its gonna mean dollars and cents not going up someone's nose. So, these casting calls are sort of simulated movie days, where they actually film D quality porn, but it's all a write-off just to insure that no flaky idiots are given a contract. Keep in mind that they're really only looking for new girls (there are only a handful of guys in most porn because there are certain things you need to be able to do to last in the biz). Usually they eat it and hire four or five grade A male porn stars to work that week, since the crews and stage is all amateur shithead type stuff, the porn usually only ends up on web sites and all the new chicks get paid 1/10th the money for a real porn. Larry figured since I can basically have sex for eight hours straight without stopping, he could hire half as many A actors that week and make more moula, or lose less depending on how you look at it. He didn't say, oh if yer good we're gonna make you an A porn star, he just said we'll pay you $2000 for a 40 hour week and see how it goes. I guess I was good, and this has been the insanity I've been living for over three years.

I'll tell you, it's really hard for me to go into much detail on what I had to do that week and what I've done every week since. I mean, in some ways it can really have a huge impact on your life and how you view people in general. It's sort of like becoming a soldier or urban police officer without the formal training that's supposed to help you desensitize yourself to grueling factors of real-life. I laugh when I see porn stars on TV talkshows defending the industry, saying that there aren't a lot of drugs and it's really just a big happy family. It's really a scary situation and you have to get intimate with people you normally wouldn't want to give your phone number to. I show up, I do what they ask and I leave. The first few weeks, I tried to have conversations with people, considering I was having sex with them or seeing them have sex with others. This was a bad move, it seemed like everyone involved either wanted to sell me something or wanted something from me, be it the fame that was coming to them and how I should do this or that with them, who needed a loan, who wanted to move in with me. I mean, most of these people are pretty insane. So, right away I figured, 1. Let's keep this thing a secret. 2. Don't make any new friends, get in get paid and get out. 3. Condoms, you gotta be nuts to fuck these people unprotected.

So this is where I'm at. I fuck about ten days a month, get paid more than my dentist and spend the rest of my time being a punk rocker. The guys in my band don't even know, they just know I was able to front the money to record our new CD and don't know where it came from. My family thinks I still make wedding videos; my girlfriend thinks I have a new job at Silver Cup studios in Queens as a set designer for Scrubs.

Well, there it is, it's all on the table, it's scary because I know a lot of you are going to judge me, not want to talk to me, I may end up very much an outcast but it feels good to get this off my chest. The release of the April issue of *Maximum RockNRoll* 2003 will make a very important day in the life of Bill Florio.

I just wanna thank everyone who helped the SHEMPS on our west coast tour in January! Floyd, Nam, Mike Thorn , Ray Wyland, Missy Hennings, Lee Dionysis, Erika Pinedo, Nicole Erny, Jennifer Maerz , Laura Rickert, and Corey Kava the AMA-ZOMBIES, the STUPOR-STARS, the ORPHANS, the FLESHIES, CHASED AND SMASHED, the JAG-OFFS, TOYS THAT KILL, DEADLY WEAPONS, PIRX THE PILOT, OCTOBER ALLIED, THE PHUZZ, the HEARTACHES, S.H.A.T and the HOLLOW-POINTS. I still don't like California all that much, but you all proved that everyone there isn't a stinker. Oh, thanks to Janelle for punching Artie in the face after he dry-humped her, and Pancho Villa's for making that burrito that Artie slipped on and broke his arm at Mission Records. I'll be sure to write about it next month.



In case you weren't convinced last time around that I was a total loser (I think I may have been the first person in *MRR* history to attempt to describe the PAULA ABDUL dance), I give you additional proof! Enemies and FBI agents take note!

A few weeks ago, I was suffering the usual effects of P.M.G.I.N.Y.S. (Poor Midwestern Girl in New York Syndrome). Due to a number of bank errors and general lack of wealth, I found myself with no money for about six days. On the seventh day, I rested, and looked at my creation and saw that it was good. No wait. On the seventh day, I found a flyer that said, "Do you want to make $20?"

We all know the answer to this question. I had pizza and candy to buy! I needed to mail order that SHOTWELL seven-inch! I had to buy three churros for a buck from the woman who sells them in Union Square! Yes, yes, I *did* need 20 bucks.

So, I grabbed the flyer off the wall. It was for a psychological experiment. I called for more information. A girl we'll call Melissa answered the phone.

"Yes, I'm calling for the psych experiment," I said.

"For the money?" Melissa asked. Yes! She was right to the point. She knew that I did not want to aid the cause of science and advance the understanding of my fellow man. Gree-dee!

"Yep," I said.

"OK, well here's how it works. You play a computer game based on probability, and the better you do on the game, the more money you make. You can earn at little as $15 and as much as $25. Does this sound like something you'd be interested in?"

"Yes!' I responded, and we arranged an appointment time. In the two days leading up to the experiment, I thought a little about it. "This was going to be *so* easy," I thought. "I am *so* good at standardized tests!"

These feelings are borne out by hard evidence, of the sort that causes one to lose friends in grade school. When I was in fourth grade, I tested in the twelfth grade level on some standardized test. This, of course, was an exaggeration of my mental powers, the reading of *Anna Karenina* at age 12 notwithstanding. But still, when it came time to show each other our scores in the cafeteria one day, I think I temporarily slipped in general unpopularity behind this girl Kim, who wet her bed. And talked about it. A lot. Fortunately, my skill at four square redeemed me, putting me somewhere between Kim and the boy whose dad was a Lego architect (and who I had a crush on).

Anyway, I was thinking, "I am $25 material! Finally, all

those years of standardized test taking can pay off! Literally!" Punk rock!

So, at four pm on a Thursday, I went to the psychology department of my university. Melissa greeted me and took me into a small room with a computer in the corner. There were a bunch of unidentifiable machines lying around.

"Okay, so here's how it works," Melissa said. "You are going to play a probability game. You have to guess whether the next number on the screen will be higher or lower. And the number will never be five. There are a number of sections. At the beginning of each section, there will be a clue. For example, it could tell you that in this round, everything is higher. Or 70% of everything will be lower. After each time you answer, the screen will show either an up arrow or a down arrow. If its up, you got it right. If its down, you got it wrong. Get it?"

"Sure," I said.

"Great. So you just press the H key for higher and the L key for lower," Melissa said. "The test takes 90 minutes. And there's a few more things to tell you about."

"Like what?"

"Well, we want to test your reactions to the test. So, we're going to put two devices around one of your eyes to see how often you blink. And then we're going to put an electrode device on one of your fingertips to measure how much you're sweating. It's the same thing they use in a lot of lie detector tests."

"No problem," I said, with visions of $25 in my head.

"Okay, and there's one last thing. You're going to put on these headphones. You will hear some really loud sounds every once in awhile. We want to test your reaction. It's a little annoying, but really its no big deal."

"Okay," I said.

So Melissa put the electrode device on my finger and the weird thing on the edge of my eye. And then I put on the headphones.

"Alright, I'm leaving now. I'm going to turn out the lights. You can ring this buzzer for me when you're done," she said. And then left.

It was now completely pitch black in the room, except for the glowing of the huge computer monitor. I looked at the screen. A question mark appeared. And then a star. Huh? And then... BEEP! Ack! The sound coming through my headphones was at a volume much higher than I had ever dared to experiment with before, even when I was fourteen and the tape in my walkman was the CIRCLE JERKS' Golden Shower of Hits!

Then another question mark appeared on the screen, then a circle. What the hell? I decided to just press something. So I pressed "H" for higher, and, again...BEEP!

Argh! What was going on? A question mark, a triangle, a arrow, a question? Huh? This made no sense! So, I kept hitting "H" or "L" randomly, and the loud sound kept coming. "BEEP! BEEP!"

I kept seeing down arrow after down arrow appear on the screen. Ack! Failure! Every once in awhile, I'd see an up arrow, get excited, and then the down arrows would appear again. The shame.

I began to think, "Maybe this is part of the experiment. Maybe the whole experiment is about giving someone the wrong directions and then measuring their frustration and growing insanity."

After about 20 minutes of beeping and lights flashing in the total darkness of a small office room, I began to entertain the possibility that this was all part of an elaborate plot. These people were cruel, evil scientists! They wanted to destroy my brain and then use my body to enact their ghastly schemes! They were probably connected with the government, Al Quada, and the makers of sugar-free candy! No! I was doomed! Soon, I would lose my will to resist! It was hopeless! Why me? Why me? All I ever did was jump up and down while listening to NIKKI AND THE CORVETTES. Is that SO wrong?

And then I realized the true horror of my situation. I had another hour to go! I kept pressed H or L, kept getting beeped, and entered into an entirely new psychological state I will call C.A.T.I. (Complete and Total Insanity). I was over, done for. Even if this wasn't the cruel work of people who had watched too much Clockwork Orange (a category which encompasses approximately 50% of all white American males), I was ruined. If I survived, I would be returned to my family, mute and unresponsive. They would prop me up in the front of the T.V., where I would spend the rest of my days watching The Price is Right! No! No! The horror!

I kept pressing the buttons, and finally, the screen just went blank. I stared at it for a few minutes, in disbelief. The sounds stopped, too. My torture had ended! It was time to try to reintroduce myself into society. Would it be the same as when I left it? Would people still be listening to J. LO and wearing high heels with jeans?

I rang the buzzer, and Melissa came into the room, smiling. "Okay, let's retrieve your scores," she said.

While she did that, I waited in the other room. A few minutes later, she came in, looking puzzled. "Did one part of the test seem easier than the other?" she asked.

"Uh..." I responded.

"You know, did you feel like you were performing well?" she asked.

"Uh. No. I just pressed whatever," I said.

"Well, hmmm, yes, your scores are really, really low," Melissa said, sounding disappointed. "Did you follow the pattern? You know, stars are high, triangles low, and all of that?"

"Oh?! THAT was what I was supposed to be doing?" I said.

At that moment, Melissa looked at me like one might look at a severely disturbed schizophrenic person who is trying to convince you that the voices are telling them to listen to U2 and kill the president.

"Yes," she said, slowly and decisively. "Yes, that was the point of the experiment."

D'oh! I was a failure! All those years of standardized testing, and, in my moment of glory, when it all mattered and the stakes were high, I failed! The shame! The humiliation!

"Well, let me get your money," she said, sighing. "You earned $17."

Well, 17 bucks, not bad, huh? I mean, I could have gotten 15, right? And then, she made me sign off on a sheet. I glanced up at the several dozen other names above mine. Jane Smith, $25; John Doe, $23; Mary Jones, $24. No one had earned less than 20 bucks! I was the most stupid person to ever take this test! I flipped up a page while Melissa wasn't looking. Yep, more rows of $20-25! Oh, I am a failure!

I took the money and Melissa said goodbye. As I left, one of her colleagues came into the room. She glanced at him with the unmistakable "Just wait till you hear this!" glance. I was going to be the laughing stock of the psych department!

But then I remembered. I had $17! Time to hit the candy store!

There are many things that make life worth living and most of them are pretty simple. When you can combine those simple things, life is going good. One of my favorite activities is watching basketball on TV with the sound off while listening to records and drinking rye.

It is a bit past the first of the year and Iowa State is getting the shit kicked out of them by Kansas. Kansas is a much better team. They still have players from their 2002 National Championship run, so the team is a bit more together. Iowa State has a lot of first year players—freshmen and recent snags from junior colleges. They do have a couple of good guards and a 7-1% kid named Alexander who has a nice sweeping hook shot, but when the team goes on offense, one guy dribbles the ball while everyone else stands in place and watches.

But even though the contest is not, I would much rather watch a couple of hours of college kids trying to wrestle the ball around than a bunch of pouty pros prancing down the court.

Don't get me wrong, I don't mind pro ball. In fact, I think that the NBA's recent wave of fundamentally sound foreign players is great for the game and I love watching teams like the Sacramento Kings and the New Jersey Nets run the Princeton offense, a fast game full of passing and unselfish play.

However, college ball is where it is at. Every game is *the* game. And for most of the players on the court, and especially on the bench, college ball is the last hurrah. Very few college

players make the pros and those that know they aren't pro-bound make their time on the court memorable. They play for the thrill of the sport, the rush that it gives them, not some chance at future fame and fortune.

I am the only person I know who drinks rye whiskey. Right now I am indulging in some Old Overholt on ice. I like the bite and the near sour, medicinal taste. I like the way it burns my lips and clings to the roof of my mouth. There are only a few place in town that carry rye. I purchased my Old Overholt for about twelve bucks at an upper-crust grocery store that specializes in minority boozes. I could have gotten the Jim Beam Rye for a tenner but I decided to upgrade—the holidays and all. The grocery also has $50 bottle of rye. Someday I'll get one. I've drunk $50 bottles of Scotch and they are so much better than whatever the bar pours. Right now I'll imagine that a good bottle of rye puts Old Overholt to shame.

The basketball game is over. Not technically—there are still five minutes on the clock—but Kansas has put in all the short white guys so the game is over.

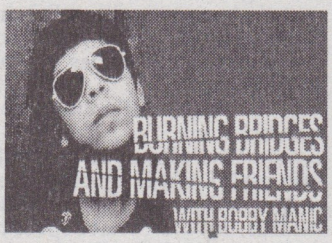
The record isn't. The turntable plays Dan Melchior's Broke Revue's *Bitterness, Spite, Rage, and Scorn*. From the first song, "Hungry Ghost," I am hooked. Dan Melchior has one of those great shitty voices that makes rock and roll work. Like Neil Young or Mike Hudson, Melchior takes what he has, stays in key, and fills his songs full of himself.

I read Melchior's liner notes. He writes "I'm sick of what you call rock and roll / Desperate happiness / Beatle boots glamorous / Minor drug abuse / I think rock and roll is something different, something closer to hermitude and crying over the expressions on dogs' faces..." He is right. And the hundred words that follow are also right on.

Someone told me that the reason I can't find rye in California is because it is an "East Coast" drink. I know my dad drank rye and he is from New York. Someone else told me that rye is an "old man's drink" and that the old men who enjoy rye are dying out—hence its unavailability. My dad is retired but I wouldn't call him old. Anyway, the first time I drank rye I was in my late twenties and in the Grand Tetons. I found a bottle of Jim Beam Rye in a rural Wyoming grocery store. Since I normally drink Jim as bourbon when I am traveling, I decided that Jim as rye would be a nice change. That rye was made in Kentucky. The rye I am drinking now was made in Kentucky. Kentucky? Wyoming? East Coast?

I think they reason you can't find rye is that it isn't hip. Like the short white guys playing garbage time on the floor and Dan Melchior's vision of rock and roll, rye is the "expressions on dogs' faces." And if that isn't a good enough reason to drink tonight, I don't know what is.

Send your rye to Scott Soriano, 1114 21st Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 USA, scotts@sl.net. No junk mail or tour schedules please.



Who can remember the last time Ray Lujan brought us one of his old "Pop Sicko" columns? Neither can I. There has been a void in every pop lover's little heart since the day Ray went away (no, not really, I just needed a good intro line) so The Powers That Be here at *MRR* gave me free reign over the amount of pop that shows up in these pages. One would think that it was quite a smart move on their behalf and a real dumb-ass move on mine, but then again they haven't read my column yet, now have they? My job, my task, my excruciating punishment for shooting off my mouth is to show you, genteel reader, that there is more to pop punk than crappy QUEERS and SCREECHING WEASEL clones, and that there is more to power pop than those great old Bomp! reissues. Lucky me.

So I guess I bit off more than I can chew (and you'd think with his huge mouth of mine I'd be able to chew a little more). I am going to attempt to sift through the mass amounts of crap that I get in for review each and every month, to bring out only the best of the best, the creme de la creme, ...and, of course, maybe a piece or two of potty waste, just for good measure. So here I go...

2002, in retrospect, wasn't as shitty of a year as I thought. It may not have been an Earth shattering year, but goddammit, some fine pop records were made and a lot of you probably missed them, so I'm gonna tell you all about 'em.

The Grasshopper Man returned in full force last year. That's right, *MRR*'s former antlered columnist and BORIS THE SPRINKLER frontman, Rev. Norb, started drinking again after being dumped by his lady friend and, as a result, released the first two installments of a rock'n'roll solo album trilogy. He plays all the instruments himself, although not very well, but it's his lack of musical training and, well, talent, that make these albums brilliant. Most of the songs could very well be Boris offerings, but Norb's half-assed guitar "solos" and irregular drumming make these CDs raw and a lot more personal. It's touching really: a middle aged, skinny, oddly dressed guy writing all of these songs about a girl who's broken his heart and done him wrong.. OK, maybe not touching, but you feel sorry for the guy, and when he wishes he had some baby back ribs and photon torpedoes to avenge his suffering, I wanna give them to him. It's goofy, and Norb is still the bastard child of the DICKIES and REZILLOS, but he's more than a strange little fast-talking geek in an antler helmet, he actually has feelings and that girl hurt those feelings. *Touch Me I'm Weird* and *Earth's Greatest Rocker* are both out on Bulge records (Norb's own label), with the final chapter due sometime later this year.

What an incredible fucking year for Holland's Stardumb Records. Signing a slew of great American and European bands, they are quickly becoming the best pop punk label around. They have given Lookout! refugees and Sacramento, CA icons the GROOVIE GHOULIES a home and released their seventh full length, *Go Stories!* featuring their newly acquired vixen drummer, Scampi. Yet another fun-filled, RAMONES-fueled, pogo dance party brought to you by a band who can more or less do no wrong. The Ghoulies have always been a cut above the rest of the American pop punk bands in my book for two reasons: they don't sound like every other band doing the Ramones thing, and no one else can sound like them.

Italy's MANGES also delivered a fine Ramones-induced album. SCREECHING WEASEL covered them on their final album, Jughead toured as a Mange last summer, and Joe Queer even sings on a few of the tunes on their first Stardumb LP, *'R Good Enough*. This band is pop punk approved, so get with the program. They graced us all with two shows in the Bay Area last summer and we had a blast hosting them (as well as Stardumb CEO, Stefan). There was drinking, shenanigans, and a lot of talk about the Ramones that weekend. Another fine example of why these guys are the heirs to the RIVERDALES' throne.

A RADIO WITH GUTS made the scene this year with their debut album, *Beat Heart Sweet Stereo* (co-released by Stardumb and Knock-Knock records, out of NY). Featuring all ex-members of the CONNIE DUNGS, ARWG picks up where they left off. They ditched the cliché pop punk sound and embraced a more personal and, dare I say, emotional sound. Emo they ain't, but comparing them to an extremely catchy JAWBREAKER wouldn't be too far of a stretch. Knock Knock also released a CDR of ARWG frontman Brandon Tussey playing several Dungs and Guts tunes solo. Both albums are must-owns.

The VINDICTIVES made a return with a Christmas single, of all things. Two songs on three different colors of wax (red, green, and clear) with a limited edition holiday postcard. This is a collector's item in the making.

Stardumb already has quite a line up set for 2003; the second volume of the *European Pop Punk Virus* compilation series (it's a who's-who of the pop punk scene in Europe and covers more or less all their premiere bands), and LPs from the Ghoulies, Dutch pop punkers the APERS, Germany's BACKWOOD CREATURES, the highly overrated DARLINGTON, and the METHADONES' (former Riverdale and ex-Screeching Weasel Danny Vapid's new project) second LP. I've heard some rumors around town about a few other projects, but Stefan will eat my liver with mayonnaise if I spill the beans. Reach out and touch the Dutch, www.stardumbrecords.com for the latest news happenings, mp3s and a boss mailorder catalog.

The PHENOMENAUTS are, without a doubt, one of the best live bands in the Bay Area. They have managed to find a way to fuse pop punk and rockabilly and not come across like a cheesy Hot Topic manufactured piece of trash. Whilst most rockabilly bands end up resembling lame nostalgic cartoons, these guys go the sci-fi/B-movie route. Here's the deal: you aren't going to get any songs about Betty Page, nor how their girlfriends look like

Betty Page. No songs about old 50s hot rods. No songs about rumbles or any of those tired out clichés. All you get is four guys who live out the gimmick of being space rangers. What a concept. Their debut album *Rockets and Robots* covers a space saga of space spies, evil space spores, galactic pioneering and other such space topics. These guys are a fun band to see and their wit, charm, awesome stage show (complete with choreography, lights, fire, and all sorts of kooky antics) and dance, dance, dancey tunes are winning them fans in every sector they meet. It's damn near impossible to not like this band (unless you are a very large, grumpy, chain smoking sour puss that writes for *Amp* magazine [not naming names]) or at least leave their show with out a smile on your face. www.thephenomenauts.com

Alien Snatch records, out of the lovely and cheerful country of Germany, released some fine pop records last year. And when I say fine, I mean motherfucking dandy humdingers. The newly relocated/former San Francisco natives the FEVERS released their power pop masterpiece *Gaan Daar Waar De Meisjes Zijn* (lemme tell you it was a pain in the fucking ass for me to get a copy of this bad boy. Every fucking record store I went to for two months was either "sold out and not ordering more for quite a while" or simply didn't carry Alien Snatch releases [for whatever dumb ass reasons], so when I finally found a copy I scared the shit out of the cute little Asian girl who was standing next to me browsing through the FAINT section or whatever, by yelling out "Finally! It's about motherfucking time Goddammit!" at an unnerving volume), and it rivals their debut single, *Show,* in terms of greatness and all around catchiness. Brian and Gavin recruited Midwest producer/ songwriter/ drummer Travis Ramin (the man who penned the majority of the TINA AND THE TOTAL BABES album) and they cranked out this masterpiece. Magnificent.

The Snatch people also put out a record that made my day for a whole week, the RIFF RANDELLS' *Lethal Lip Gloss* 10." It's everything I wanted a girl band to be: cute, sassy, poppy, and did I mention cute and sassy? There's equal parts RAMONES, RUNAWAYS, NIKKI CORVETTE, Radio X-era DONNAS and maybe even a little bit of CHIXDIGGIT in 'em (oh, the delightful double entendre!)

And let us not forget the *Face Rakin' Rock* LP by the MIGHTY IONS. The 'Ions were a Boston based band from the late 70s that featured members of UNNATURAL AXE and GG ALLIN AND THE JABBERS' first line up. They had a really great wrestling rock´n´roll shtick going on, and the only thing I love as much as the rock'n'roll is the rasslin'. All the tunes were from early 80s demos that have been (for the most part) previously unreleased. These guys are what would have been the outcome if the DICTATORS and the REAL KIDS had a Texas Tornado match. For more info on these and other fine releases get yer sorry asses over to www.aliensnatch.de, brother!

MORTICIAS LOVERS are in heavy rotation in my car. These Italian bad asses have released their second album on Zaxxon Records and it fucking smokes. Mixing the snot-nosed elements of the KIDS, the lo-fi gene of SUPERCHARGER, and a trashed-out nod to 50s r'n'r like the SPACESHITS, this is fun for the whole rock and roll family. And as a bonus, it's delivered with those adorable Italian accents. Just precious. Listen to them rework PAUL COLLINS BEAT's "Rock 'n' Roll Girl," I swear to God I don't even know if they are singing the correct lyrics. www.morticiaslovers.com

In the mood for a little snot and snarl mixed with catchy-as-fuck sing alongs and goofy love songs? Yeah, I thought so. Sacramento's SECRETIONS released their second CD, *'Til Death,* on Springman Records, and the tag team vocals of Danny Secretion and Mickie Rat make this a good mix of snarl and croon. Mickie does the angry songs, Danny does the poppy, goofy ones. Perfect combo. It's got the hooks of the Queers and Ramones, the rockingness of MOTORHEAD and the bite of the ANGRY SAMOANS. You can't live without their song "Baby You Make Me Pop a Boner." You love that shit. You love it. They also released a split single with their hometown heroes the Groovie Ghoulies called *'Til Death (Do Us Party)* which is also available on Springman. www.wesecreteyousuck.com

Alright, the best for last. 2002 was the debut of the three pop bands that knocked me flat on my ass and will make everyone fall in love with them as well. Those Germans at Screaming Apple hit the jack pot with the MALLRATS and the EXPLODING HEARTS.

The Mallrats are three well dressed young men from, you guessed it, Sacramento, California, who are making friends both far and wide, delivering an ultra catchy, 60s-influenced power pop sound. Boy genius Ted Angel serves up a dozen Ric-O-Phonic gems in the vein of the early HI-FIVES, STIV BATORS solo work, BUZZCOCKS, JAM, Paul Collins Beat and those other well groomed mod/power pop punk hit makers. Pick up their debut LP *Fall In Love All Over Again…* it's a bedroom dance party just waiting to happen. www.themallrats.com

What can I say about the EXPLODING HEARTS that I haven't said before? No, really, I can't think of a single thing to write about them that I haven't already written elsewhere. Perfectly done power pop; catchy and fun, but not obnoxiously cute and sterile, with well crafted bittersweet lyrics and more attitude and Rock'n'Roll Edge than any other pop band I know. They just know what makes a good pop song. They are one of my favorite bands as of right now. They already have two classic records under their white vinyl belts, their debut LP *Guitar Romantic* on Screaming Apple and the *Making Teenage Faces 7"* on Vinyl Warning, and a few more in the works. This band deserves all the hype they are receiving. They really are as good as people say they are. Sleazy, dirty, candy ballads and mescaline-induced teen angst served with a whiskey Slurpee chaser, the HEARTS are your new favorite band. Eat it up. www.expodinghearts.com. For more info on the rest of Screaming Apple's roster of power, www.screaming-apple-records.de

Sacramento's FM KNIVES are another group of hitmakers. Their debut CD, *Useless and Modern,* belongs in the Dirtnap Records catalog. This New Wave Pt: 2 thing may be the next summer time trend, but these guys aren't a schtick, gimmick, or glossy band, they are four ugly guys playing catchy tunes straight out of the BUZZCOCKS, BOYS, and KIDS song books. Half the time I'm convinced the singer is trying to sound exactly like Pete Shelley, the rest of the time it's a toss up between Kid Reid, Matt Dangerfield, and the rest of the Boys. You'd swear these guys were from England, circa '79, that's how good they are. Anyway, Broken Rekkids is reissuing their first album on vinyl later this year and Smart Guy Records just released *Estrogen* (Cardwell is right, that is weird to say), a new EP which is right on par with the album. The future looks bright for these guys.

Mutant Pop Records went under (finally) this year. I was fucking thrilled when Tim Chandler called it quits and stopped shitting out CDRs. Mutant Pop was one of my favorite labels in high school, their 7" series got me into a lot of bands and other labels, but when Tim made the move to CDRs and waged war on *MRR* for not recognizing them as legit releases I lost all respect for the man and the label. 90% of the CDRs he put out were awful—almost everything that was sent to him he put out. The quality was lower than humanly possible. Chandler closed shop without a word in the middle of last year and left a lot of bands hanging. Several releases were just scrapped as Chandler just sat around with his thumb up his ass blaming the whole world for his label's downfall. News flash buddy, the reason your label never amounted to shit was because you're an asshole that thinks the world is out to get you and you release half assed generic bands on a format that anyone with a PC can produce. Apparently he's planning a "rebirth" soon. Whoop-dee-doo. Keep your internet goons and conspiracy theories to yourself dick nose, we're doing fine without you.

That's it. I'm out of space and Mike Thorn is shaking his iron fist at me.

BottomLine: Hope you enjoyed this, or at least found some of the info useful. Get in touch with me and send me your band's shit. revmanic@cs.com The Regaining Sound also released some good records, but didn't have space to write about them. Greg Oblivian really was the brains behind that outfit.

1,800,000 and counting

A column by Prisoners.

I've been extraordinarily lazy lately and haven't submitted a column for quite some time. But the recent spate of flag-waving yahoos sprouting up like weeds has gotten my feathers all ruffled and I felt compelled to comment on the alleged "ideals" that the rag (oops! I mean flag) purportedly stands for.

I am sick and goddamn tired of all these sycophantic RASPy wannabe flag-waving morons. Oooooh! "I'm going to drag out my dusty ol' flag and fly it proud because, while I may not support our government, I sure as tootin' support the ideals that our grand ol' flag stands for! Yahoo!" Yessir. This here is an open rant to all those columnists, letter writers, and bands who are so totally brainwashed that they believe that the American Rag stands for anything more than some propaganda that was created in some government think-tank.

Let's talk about these grand ideals that the flag supposedly stands for. And just what exactly are those anyway? Freedom of speech? Yeah right. There has never been freedom of speech. Sure, you can say what you want. But as soon as what you say becomes a threat, the powers that be will ensure that you are labeled a lunatic while they drag out their "experts" who will assure us that Capitalism is the vanguard of freedom and shall bring salvation to us all. The Native American has certainly had his fair share of freedom of speech. And thanks to alcohol we've been able to keep that down to a low roar. And if that doesn't work, well, we can always just throw 'em in prison. Hell, it worked for Leonard Peltier! We can always do it again. Yeah, the public might be outraged at first, but once we put our million-dollar PR firm on the case, we'll spin the truth to be whatever we want it to be. Legitimacy. That's what it's all about. What is the point of being able to say what you want if what you say can so easily be denounced as the ramblings of the lunatic fringe? That's one good thing about the Internet: A kid in his basement can set up a website that looks just as slick and professional as anything that a billion dollar media conglomerate can put together. And that is legitimacy. Freedom of speech is pointless without legitimacy. Our small independent papers and newsletters are discredited by their very own unprofessional appearance thereby rendering the effectiveness of freedom of speech nonexistent to the majority of the population. And it has always been this way.

Freedom of religion/Separation of church and state. First let me state that anyone who needs the crutch of religion has their own weaknesses to deal with. I am not a proponent of any kind of organized mind control. But, I do believe that if you should so choose to believe, that is your right. But does freedom of religion, and further more, the separation of Church and State truly exist? Yeah, right. As long as your religion falls into the realm of accepted religions. Let's ask the Native American and the descendants of African abductees about the preservation of their native faiths, and just how respectful our founding fathers were of these faiths. There's a reason why all of our currency must be printed with the slogan: "In God we trust." So much for separation of church and state.

Freedom and justice for all. Do I really even need to address this issue? There has never been freedom and justice for all in this great and fair land. That is nothing more than a myth.

The right to the pursuit of happiness. Oh yes, I'm sure the natives of this country were very impressed with the concern the founders of our country gave to their right to pursue happiness. I enjoy smoking pot. But since that doesn't seem to agree with Society's definition of happiness, I guess that rule doesn't apply to me. What do ya know!

Since the WTC attacks, everyone has been lauding the American populace for being so helpful and supportive of each other. Well big fucking deal, assholes. So it takes a horrific tragedy of tremendous proportions to restore our innate sense of humanity! Oh boy! I am so impressed with the way we have all pulled together to help each other. Guess what? Almost every other culture in the world ALWAYS looks out for those in need. Imagine that! Could it be that they have more of a sense of humanity than we do? Could it be that these foreign cultures haven't died inside to the point where a stranded elderly person on the side of a freeway can't get anyone to stop and help? Where were all these "United Americans" when two years ago a man who had flipped his car off the freeway lay broken and bleeding for hours while rush hour traffic callously passed him by? No one even bothered to call 911! When is the last time you stopped your petroleum waste spewing machine to help someone who's car has broken down on the side of the road? How many times have you stopped to pick up a stranger on a cold and nasty night and offered them a ride? When you see your elderly neighbor struggling to remove the twelve inches of snow from his driveway, do you hurry over to help, or do you simply go about your business? I think it is very sad and telling indeed of the depths of insensitivity that we have sunken to when I see how the nation is pulling together. Perhaps its because we are all cowards who find security in numbers that has caused the great pulling together of the populace. Oh yes! We can all band together to fight the evil terrorists who desire to attack our grand way of life. We certainly know that it has nothing to do with a foreign policy that encourages the economic rape of Third World nations. No no. We won't change that! The corporations who rule this world would be displeased, and then where would we be without them! Please someone write and tell me of the grand ideals that the American Rag stands for. And when you do, if you have the courage to do so, I will write you back tearing every single one of your points to shreds. Is that close-minded? No. I've heard the other side. And all I've heard is more jingoistic propaganda from the warmongering whores So please—Do write!

* * * * *

Another issue I'd like to address has to do with an epidemic that has been sweeping quietly across America. This is a health issue that I rarely see address in the corporate media, and virtually never in the alternative media. It's called Hepatitis C Virus. How many of you know about HCV? I will quote from the website for the FDA Consumer magazine.

"The nation's most common blood-borne infection, hepatitis C is estimated to affect some 4 million Americans in its chronic form. Eventually, as many as 70 percent of them will develop liver disease, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. ...

"Hepatitis C is one of five currently identified viruses--hepatitis A, B, C, D, E--all of which can attack and damage the liver. Widely viewed as one of the most serious of the five, the hepatitis C virus (HCV) is spread primarily through contact with infected blood and can cause cirrhosis (irreversible and potentially fatal liver scarring), liver cancer, or liver failure. Hepatitis C is the major reason for liver transplants in the United States, accounting for 1,000 of the procedures annually. The disease is responsible for between 8,000 and 10,000 deaths yearly.

"Some estimates say the number of HCV-infected people may be more than four times the number of those infected with the AIDS virus....

"Presently, there is no vaccine or other means of preventing hepatitis C infection. HCV exists in many different forms,...confounding researchers in their quest to develop a vaccine...

"Once HCV is contracted, treatment or the body's defenses can cure a small portion of patients. In most others, however, HCV's frequent mutations allow it to evade the immune system, defeating attempts to develop a cure. Some treatments are available, but they don't work for all patients. ..."

I have hepatitis C. I got it from sharing needles with someone who was infected. I had no idea that I was infected until my buddy advised me that it'd be a good idea to get tested. That's the tucked up thing about HCV. It rarely manifests any symptoms until it is far too late to treat it. So please, people...If you have ever used any needle drugs and shared your works, go get tested now. The sooner it is caught, the better the chance for the treatment to work. Your local free clinic should provide testing, and Medicaid/Medicare would cover the treatments. Any time that blood to blood transfer can occur, you are at risk for contracting HCV. You will not know if someone is infected. They may not show symptoms for decades. Tattoos, sharing shaving equipment, including hair trimmers, high-risk sexual behavior...You know the drill. Go get tested man. Liver failure is not very nice. There is no medicine or machines that will keep you alive once your liver starts to go bad. When that happens, your only hope then is a liver transplant, and what do you think are the odds that someone like you will get a new liver? Go get tested, and get the treatment if you need it.

Contact any of the following organizations for more on hepatitis C, its treatment, support groups, and Internet mailing lists. Please get tested, and if you have this disease, seek out information. It's your life, take charge of it!

American Liver Foundation/1425 Pomptom Ave./Cedar Grove, NJ/07009/
1-800-GO LIVER (1-800-465-4837)

Hepatitis C Foundation/1502 Russet Drive/Warminster,

PA/18974/215-672-2606

Hepatitis Foundation International:
http://www.fda.gov/fdac/features/1999/299_hepc.html
Center for Disease Control:
http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/hepatitis/c/faq.htm

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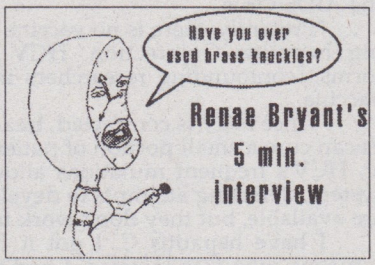
Since this is a prisoner column, I suppose it's only right that I discuss a prison issue. I want to talk about the food.

I'm not going to start ranting about the quality of the food, or crying about the quantity; or lack thereof. No, what I want to talk about is much more insidious than that.

Have you heard of tryptophan? Tryptophan is the chemical that occurs naturally in turkey that makes people feel lethargic and tired after that big Thanksgiving meal. In the state of Michigan, the vast majority of our meat entrees are turkey or a derivative of turkey (i.e.-turkey bologna, turkey hotdogs, turkey hamburger, etc.). Is this for economic reasons? Is turkey cheaper than chicken, beef, and pork? I think not. In fact, from what I understand, turkey is actually more expensive than these other meats. Is it possible they are concerned for our health since turkey is supposedly a healthy alternative to the other meats that I mentioned? Yeah, right! No no. I think it is safe to say that the Michigan Department of Corrections (and possibly other states-I don't know) have hit upon a way to safely (read "undetectably") drug the prison population into a form of semi-sedation. Oh yes. It seems quite clear to me. And if you should choose not to eat the meat? Well, sure you can get a vegetarian diet (a vegan diet is virtually impossible without suffering some sort of deficiency). But it is not an attractive option at all. They definitely do not go out of their way to provide healthy or tasty vegetarian meals. Usually it is simply whatever is on the menu for side dishes doubled up. And sometimes they may even throw in a small portion of cottage cheese of peanut butter (no jelly, of course)!

So I guess that's all folks! I hope I was able to educate, amuse, inform, and irritate. But what the fuck do I know anyway?

Peace, Anarchy, Love, James Duane #214699 Huron Valley Men's Facility 3201 Bemis Road Ypsilanti, MI 48197-0911



I have missed several columns and apologize profusely to anyone who noticed. I finally have a computer in my house, so now there is no excuse for missing a column. Trying to obtain DSL service through Earthlink was a fucking nightmare that kept me without online service for a good seven weeks. My advice to anyone seeking DSL is to order through a cable company who will personally install it for you. Anyway, onto the real subject matter of this column…

Anyone who has read my column in the past few years knows I am a 5th grade "Sheltered English Immersion" teacher at a year-round school in Southern California. This is my sixth year of full-time teaching. I substitute-taught grades K-12 for three years before that. I take teaching very seriously and consider it a part of the fulfillment of my dharma (the other, of course, singing in a punk band). Well, believe it or not, yours truly was named "Teacher of the Year." Can you believe that shit? I am totally honored. Now I "compete" at district level. Fucking bizarre… My colleagues even know I'm in a touring punk band and they still voted for me. Crazy… Even though my co-workers know, I let them in on my second life slowly and never told my students.

One of the moms, of one of my former students, works at the school. She is a classified employee and works with the students. Her son is in 6th grade now. I gave all the secretaries All or Nothing HC shirts for Christmas. I decided to give her a CD, tank top, and our promo poster. She's young, cute, and hip, so I thought she'd appreciate it. She loved the gifts and because of financial strain, they were actually the only gifts she received. Needless to say, her son discovered his 5th grade teacher is in a punk band and started listening to aonhc non-stop. He also had to call his best friends (my other former students) and inform them. They were in disbelief until they saw the CD with their 5th grade teacher's picture on it. Lisa (the mom) informed me that the boys wanted to see aonhc play. We had a show coming up at Showcase with Meet the Virus (Kirsten from Naked Aggression's new band). I gave Lisa a flyer. She decided she would take the boys to the show.

The night of the show I was walking around and I saw Jackie (another former student, now in 6th grade). I gave her a hug and asked her how she knew about the show. She informed me that she "goes to Showcase all the time." Oh, now I realized I was dealing with an experienced punkette. She was excited and told me that the boys would be there soon. All of the sudden it occurred to me how cool this was. How fucking amazing it was that our show was going to be the boys' first punk show. The first punk show they ever went to would be their 5th grade teacher's. My first punk show was 7 Seconds and Uniform Choice at a hall in Riverside off of La Sierra. I had to be home by 11 pm so I missed most of 7 Seconds. I remember those first punk shows and how amazing they were to me. They opened up a new universe. I didn't know it then, but they indoctrinated me into my life as I know it. Lifetime member of punk rock…

Finally, the boys arrived with Lisa. I introduced them to my bandmates as they wandered by. Finally, it was time for us to go on. I directed the kids to stand right in front of the stage. Lisa took pictures for us. Before we started I instructed the audience that these were my former students and to make sure they didn't get hurt. I still felt like I was at school and had to look out for them. Anyway… We played. I dedicated "La Maestra" (The Teacher) to them (my Spanish song about teaching and how important the students and their cultures are). I also talked about how cool it was that they were getting into punk so early. When the pit died down I asked everyone to let the kids pit for a song without getting hurt. It was surreal. After our set was finished little Andrew informed me that we were "tight." I guess in 12-year-old speak that's as good as it gets. What's funny is that it was really important to me that they liked the band and had a good time. I worked the merch for a while and went back downstairs to take some pictures of Meet the Virus. To my surprise the kids had found their way into the pit and were holding their own. They didn't have much style for the circle but what they lacked in circle pit agility they made up for in pure enthusiasm and joy. I couldn't stop laughing. They were sooo cute and spastic. Then finally the classic event occurred. They asked me to get into to the pit with them. I did. I circle pitted with my former 5th grade students. My two worlds finally collided in a big fucking way. As one of the dads put it, "Sure, Eric can go to Ms. Bryant's show. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. How many people can say they saw their former teacher sing in a punk band?" Right about now I'm feeling even better about being named "Teacher of the Year." It means it will be even more difficult for them to fire me.

A month ago, All Or Nothing HC played at Mission Records and 924 Gilman. The shows were awesome and everyone was so fucking helpful and encouraging. A big thanks to everyone who made those two show so special for us. Thanks especially to Love Songs who played with us with the Copy and Destroy spoken word tour. That was a new experience, truly memorable.

The thing that bums me about SoCal is how dumb some people are when it comes to supporting touring bands at a venue. Northern California is superior in that way. I book shows for and have several bands stay with me, but I can't do a thing about some of the "stick up their asses" SoCal crowds. Sorry. I just purchased the new Voids record. It kicks ass. You can look them up at www.thevoids.net <http://www.thevoids.net/>.

I finally received Meet the Virus's new CD which also rules. I'm slowly getting the compilation together and as always offer a lame ass apology to those who have been waiting patiently. Well, I suppose that's enough for one column. Go see *Bowling for Columbine*.

Visit www.feminist.org <http://www.feminist.org/> or www.prochoice.org <http://www.prochoice.org/> and support women's reproductive rights. I am not oblivious to the possible war at hand, but I do not feel I can offer any unique perspective. You can always read Chomsky or Vidal to get those.

You can email me and I will answer you at webmistress@ontherag.net or www.ontherag.net <http://www.ontherag.net/>

PO Box 251, Norco, CA 92860-0251. Thanks for reading.

My cat saved me from potential arrest. That, and having to take care of a busted DJ sound system. That's how I'm spinning it anyway, since I missed out on all the fun on January 18.

Before going further, lets make it clear that the ANSWER controlled twin march-and-rally protests in San Francisco and Washington DC on Saturday, January 18 were but two events in a week full of anti-war protest and action. The traditional social democratic/pacifist groups have organized themselves as the Iraq Pledge of Resistance and sponsored local civil disobedience on January 16 (the anniversary of the first Gulf War) and mass civil disobedience at the White House on January 19 that coincided with mass student actions. And the folks of Anti-War Action called a Black Bloc for the San Francisco demo as part of their effort to organize a breakaway action. That's the one I wanted to support.

Let's start from the beginning. I got an email from Jeff (all names have been changed to protect the guilty) introducing himself as a member of Anti-War Action and asking would I like to help out with another breakaway action from the ANSWER march and rally on Saturday, January 18.

Would I like to help out? Does the Pope shit in the woods? Is the bear catholic?

Of course I said. Jeff and I met at a café in Berkeley, and he gave me a basic outline of the event. Both of us understood the security needs around the action, so we left things vague. I told him to plug me in wherever I was needed.

In our exchange of emails over the next couple of days, I learned that I would probably be helping with the portable sound system I praised three columns ago when I saw it in action at the October 26 demo. The plan as laid out at an open meeting of affinity groups held the Friday before the demo called for AWA to facilitate the breakaway march to a few key urban locations so that the autonomous affinity groups on the breakaway could take independent action. The sound system was to accompany the breakaway march until the first direct action, when it would be spirited away to a safe location to keep it from being damaged, confiscated, or stolen. Folks who regularly read my column know I moved from Oakland to south of Market, San Francisco ten months ago. I was able to arrange for a relatively secure place to store the sound system in the neighborhood, the idea being I would help stow the equipment and return quickly to the breakaway action.

A quick aside, when my girlfriend and I moved in together, we each brought a cat. Hers is getting on in years, and Kay recently found a growing cyst on her belly. Probably just a fat cyst the vet told us, but best to remove and test it to be sure it's not cancerous. The operation coincided with the ANSWER demo. My girlfriend also intended to attend the march and rally, the legal part with some of our friends, and so we had to divide up care of the cat, to make sure the cat didn't pull out the stitches once she recovered from the anesthetic. I was scheduled to cat sit after 5 that Saturday, while Kay went off to dinner with a couple of friends from her photo club.

I arrived at Montgomery and Market, the AWA gathering point, at 10 that Saturday morning. There I was introduced to Sam, my buddy on the sound. He had a van parked nearby, into which we would toss the sound system, carrying rack and bike for transport from the breakaway to safe storage, then hastily return to the action. I met other AWA folks, and waited for the march to begin. During the march we all were to hand out tiny slips of paper that announced the Grove and Polk assembly point and 2:30 departure for the breakaway march. I had a brief altercation with an ANSWER peace pig as the crowds formed up into the march. I was caught out in the space between the front of the march and the police escort and was approached by a march security goon.

"Unless you're press, you're going to have to step back onto the sidewalk until the ANSWER banner passes," he said. "You can join the march after the banner passes."

Then he put his hand on me to push me toward the sidewalk.

"Don't fucking touch me," I snarled. "That's assault asshole."

"Hey…" He started, stepped back, and signaled for help. I used the opportunity to dash toward the head of the march, where I ducked into the crowd as my ANSWER security thug shouted for me to stop.

We stayed at our corner, some of us mixing through the crowd passing out flyers until close to the end of the march. During that time, the sound system was used to broadcast music, and to feature a decent South Bay rapper who often attracted quite an audience. Anti-War Action is anarchist by the way. They may have said they don't feel comfortable putting a label on themselves, but that didn't stop them from also passing out a pamphlet entitled: *Peace is Patriotic and that's the Problem: an anarchist perspective*. In every respect AWA appeared to be a typical lackadaisical anarcho-youth group, with many of its members hanging out, kicking back, listening to the music and enjoying the warm sun on a winter's day. I was soon to learn that appearances are deceiving.

It was past two when things got packed up, the blaring sound system was mobilized and the AWA crew started for the Civic Center rally. Sam guided the bike while I pushed from the back. After a block, the music inexplicably cut out and the sound system died. A cell phone suddenly appeared, calls were made, and a repairman named Jake materialized. It seems that there were a couple of acquainted groups doing actions with portable DJ sound systems in the march, all serviced by Jake who sped from one electronic problem to another on his bike. Two-thirds of AWA left for the breakaway march's assembly point, with every expectation that the breakaway's sound would be fixed. Jake couldn't repair it in the middle of the street, with people milling around and the end of the march approaching, so we pushed the sound system out behind the Powell Street BART station, only to have one of the tires on the rack go flat on the way over.

Things were not looking good. As Jake feverishly worked over the system components without much luck, the rest of AWA conferred. The remaining organizers had to get to the breakaway, but they couldn't just leave Sam, Jake and me to protect a mobile sound setup worth several grand, especially considering Sam would probably have to leave almost immediately for his van so we could stow the increasingly useless equipment. More calls were made and some help was secured for us. AWA also needed another sound system, which they were busily calling around for as they walked away.

The revolution might not be televised, but fuck if it won't be run by cell phone.

Needless to say, I was impressed with the level of organization combined with flexibility exhibited by Anti-War Action. That didn't exactly compensate for being stuck with a dead sound system instead of going on a riotous breakaway march. I had taken responsibility for safeguarding the sound however, and in the final analysis being responsible has a lot to do with whether or not a small revolutionary group successfully carries off its actions.

It was almost 2:30 when Sam dashed away for his van. By the time we got the equipment loaded, transported and stored and we raced back to intercept the breakaway, it was almost 4:15. The rowdy colorful breakaway crowds, still over 7-800 strong, were celebrating just having spray-painted and paint bombed the Chronicle newspaper building. As the jubilant crowd attacked the Citicorp Building, location of the British Embassy, at Sansome and Market with more spray-paint and paint bombs, I glanced at my watch. 4:30. As the breakaway went on a rampage behind a screen of smoke bombs and barricades of overturned newspaper stands and trash cans, I quickly backtracked across Market. I had to take care of a sick cat at 5, and it was about a half hour's walk home.

You don't know how hard it was to head for home instead of joining in on attacks that included Wells Fargo Bank, Starbucks and a thorough trashing of the INS building, with only 2 arrests to the whole action. I had so wanted the October 26 breakaway to do half as much, and here was direct action breaking out, not to mention windows all around me. This breakaway was by no means the revolution, and there will be plenty of opportunities to join in on future breakaways from the bankrupt Left's dog-and-pony protests as I argue below. Taking responsibility has a lot to do with whether or not a relationship is successful as well.

I also had to help Sam retrieve the sound system so that he could take it with him in his van, but that didn't happen until close to 6 that day. So, you can blame my cat for why I have only a second-hand overview of the breakaway march to offer you. The tactical brilliance revealed by this summary in turn points up the debt AWA owes to the bloc tactics of European autonomen, anti-imperialists and anti-fascists.

First, a brief note on the breakaway's numbers and composition. Between 2 to 3,000 people participated, about the same as the October 26 breakaway. Unlike the main demo, which went from 80,000 in October to 150,000 in January, the breakaway did not expand, nor was it expected to without a dramatically successful action under its belt. Over-the-top success on January 18, plus favorably sensational press coverage, should boost participation the next time around. As for the black bloc call, very few members of the breakaway actually dressed up in typical black bloc fashion. Indeed, perhaps the most militant group in the breakaway was the fabulously attired, radical queer pink bloc.

The breakaway fucked with the cops right from the start by instigating two separate renegade marches of about equal size 15 minutes apart. Both marches snaked through downtown, chalking, spray-painting and stenciling as they went. At some point I assume the two marches coalesced back together on Market. Spotters, cell phones and signal flags were used to keep the breakaway coordinated and on target, not to mention a couple steps ahead of the police. The breakaway quickly stopped and changed directions, sometimes even reversing course in seconds. A countdown from 10 signaled the entire march to suddenly sprint for a block. Diversions and distractions by some demonstrators kept the cops at bay at the Chronicle and Citicorp buildings while other demonstrators chalked, stickered, spray-painted and paint bombed these targets. Newspaper stands, trashcans and police barricades were knocked into the streets to slow down pursuing cops.

During the rampage after the Citicorp building, one indy-media reporter announced that the breakaway "can do anything it wants right now." The INS building was heavily graffitied, several windows were broken including the glass front doors, and the metal detector inside was damaged. All the while, the marchers played cat-and-mouse with the police, who grew increasingly angry at being consistently outmaneuvered and outfoxed by the demonstrators. Frustrated, an undercover cop in the crowd pulled down one protester for arrest, resulting in a melee as others tried to unarrest the individual. Another person was arrested at this time as well.

When the breakaway's numbers fell to 3-400 people, the cops attempted to corral and corner the marchers, preparing for a potential mass arrest. The riotous crowd refused to be hemmed in however, instead heading back to Market Street and the Civic Center. Enraged police attacked the dwindling march over and over, with motorcycle police attempting to drive their bikes into the crowd. AWA called the march to an end at the Powell Street BART station and attempted to peacefully disperse, only to have cops in full riot gear chase demonstrators down into the station. Apparently, those pursued avoided arrest by leaping over the turnstiles.

"The anti-globalization movement is dead," one of the masked black-clad breakaway protesters said. "But the anti-capitalist movement is alive and well." Thank Marx. Fuck apologizing for or denouncing the breakaway's violent actions against capitalist property. I'm proud to have played the limited part I did. And for those of you who dismiss me as a 50-year-old aging hippie nostalgic for the '60's, let me quote Mykel Board: "You'll be selling insurance when you're my age." I don't intend to get stuck on the sound system the next time though. No sick cats either. I think I'll take my own advice before the next breakaway, form up a left communist affinity group and jump wholeheartedly into the action. You can count on there being a next time by the way. That's not a prediction, but a fact in this calm before the war.

(Unfortunately, I won't be reporting on the February 16 protests in San Francisco. Originally scheduled for the 15 to coincide with worldwide protests, the SF events were postponed until the next day to accommodate a local Chinese New Year celebration. I was unable to change my own plans to make it to the protest.)

I'm tying up this April column in the middle of February (February 15 to be exact) thanks to *MRR*'s printing schedule, and the US has not yet started bombing Iraq back to the Stone Age. Whether or not a military invasion is imminent is of course the sixty-four dollar question. (I'm old enough to know where that expression comes from, first hand.) On the one hand, much has been made of America's isolation vis-à-vis the United Nations and how we've been alienating our allies in Europe and the Middle East with our bullying and how the Arab street will be outraged into revolt over unilateral US military action. On the other hand there's the momentum the US has already built up with massive military deployments, the waning support for a war with Iraq at home and the impending scorching summer weather that'll make fighting hell. Guess which hand I choose.

I predict that, by the time you read these words, the US will have fought and won a war against Iraq, and that a US military occupation government now administers the country from Baghdad. Cowboy America has gone it alone and pissed off the rest of the world, but fuck 'em, this is the United States of America after all. Nobody tells the US what to do, nor does America have to ask for permission. The rest of the world can go fuck itself as far as a lot of Americans are concerned.

It's obvious I do a lot of prognostication in this column, much of it wrong as when I speculated that an ongoing recession would all but guarantee the Democrats victory in the 2002 elections. The very nature of writing this column is a form of prognostication however, because there's a month and a half lapse between when a column goes to press and when you can read that column from a newsstand copy. That means, not only do I have to be reasonably extrapolative in the long run so as not to look like I have my head entirely up my ass, what I write in mid-February must be relevant to *MRR* readers in April, both of which can be tricky when dealing with politics and current events as I am wont to do. For all I know, universal international opposition to US belligerence has forced a five month delay on American plans until the next weather based window of military opportunity, fall of 2003. For all I know, US troops are still fighting, house by house, through Baghdad, or angry popular Islamist uprisings have overthrown the governments of Saudi Arabia and Jordan, or Israel is ethnically cleansing the West Bank and Gaza, driving millions of Palestinians into neighboring countries, or a dozen other equally possible scenarios have occurred to amplify the crisis of war and push the world to the brink of chaos.

This could be an April Fools column, whether I intend it or not.

Regular readers of *MRR* know about the April Fools issue. I've indulged once or twice in an April Fools column myself, even netted some big fools like Jeff Bale and Mel Cheplowitz, but in general I don't go in for such pranks. Had I more space I'd love to discuss, not exactly predicting the future, but how to get a handle on what probably is going to happen so that you're not too surprised when the shit hits. Right now, I'll predict that I'll be detailing my participation in more protests next column, especially if this column's predictions come true. The day the US starts dropping bombs, and the day after, all that horror. I really do hope that this column proves me the fool as far as an Iraqi war is concerned, and that the American war machine's brutal juggernaut has been stayed.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... You can find the "lost" Hooligan column at the new, improved http://www.huahuacoyotl.com. To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligan3@mindspring.com.

Bay Area Straight Edge

Oaktown, Sucka Free, the Yay Area, whatever you want to call it, its a nice place to be right now if you are into straight edge hardcore/punk. While this has never been a boom town for straight edge hardcore like Boston or New York, we have had our shining moments (however fleeting they might have been). Which reminds me, pick up the UNIT PRIDE discography if you haven't already. There are a lot sweet bands

worth checking out, so here you go in no particular order:
ALLEGIANCE - Not the spooky skinhead band, but the good up and coming band out of San Francisco. Don't know much about these guys except that their singer John helped me out once by letting me interview him for a school project. I have had the good fortune of putting on a show with them, and I was very impressed. If it means anything, my guitarist is in love with this band. Heard an mp3 off their yet-to-be-released 7," and there is no doubt that this band has their shit together. If you like it fast and edge, then check out ALLEGIANCE. Definitely the band to be reckoned with this year. You can score a demo at www.eightclip.com/allegiance, or write to Ross Trenary, 1049 Cragmont Ave, Berkeley, CA 94708.
TIME FOR LIVING - Great bunch of guys out of the East Bay area. They have a more NYHC mosh-core thing going on, but they pull it off well. The singer is nice and sincere, and likes to yell "C'mon (insert location of show), lets see you move!" a lot on stage. Good band, good guys. Get their CD demo at http://timeforliving.net, or order from 5478 Vicente Way, Oakland, CA 94609.
STOCKHOLM SYNDROME - OK, this band isn't a straight edge band. Actually, the singer has been drunk on stage every time I've seen them. But they have two straight edge members, are from San Francisco, and they fucking shred. Ten song demo in under ten minutes. Heard they do a YOUTH OF TODAY cover. You can obtain a tape demo by contacting one drunk Englishman at PO Box 1011, Burlingame, CA 94011.
DAMAGE DONE - OK, this band isn't a Bay Area band (stay with me though). They are actually a straight edge band out of San Luis Obispo, but the singer and drummer live in the area. So they get included whether they like it or not. Their new five-song 7" *Never Wash Away* is a ten-fold improvement over their last record. My favorite song lyrically is "Stand," where Kyle writes: "But now it seems we've got nothing to say / as our words get diluted each day / And there's no more "punk" in "hardcore punk" / 'cause it's only cool to think one way." Kyle's energy on stage is electric, plus he is an all-around stand up dude. This band definitely deserves your support. You can check this record out by going to www.westernXfront.com, or writing to 1812 11th Street, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266.
LAB RATS - Unfortunately this band is calling it quits, but not before leaving behind a self-released full length CD and a split LP with SCISSORHANDS. The LAB RATS have been stomping around the Bay Area for a few years now, and have always managed an energetic and youthful stage presence. I swear the guitarist couldn't have been more than 13 when I first saw them. This column won't come out in time (so by the time you read this it will have already happened), but I am putting on their last show out here at San Francisco State on March 1, 2003. Half the bands mentioned here will be playing, so I hope to see all you Bay Area punks and hardcore kids there. While the LAB RATS will be missed, I am sure it won't be the last that we'll here from these guys.
TREASON - Contains members of the LAB RATS (I told you), and the singer from BREAKER BREAKER. I was completely expecting the opposite when I heard this demo. Fast, thrashy hardcore with quick breakdowns. The lyrics remind me of AMERICAN NIGHTMARE, but the music reminds me of a band like SWING KIDS or ANTIOCH ARROW. Another ten-song demo under ten minutes shows that this band is not fucking around. Get their demo at 1724 Pierce St., San Francisco, CA 94115.
AFI - Hehehe. Just kidding. This band was voted #7 on *Rolling Stone*'s list of bands to look out for in 2003. I believe the article used the words "Straight edge, mascara-clad heart throb..." I heard an advance of the new album. If you like drum machines, ENYA worship, and Annie Lennox impersonations, pick this up.

In Other News...

Has anybody heard the new Suicide File LP? This record exceeded all of my expectations and then some (see my write-up in the review section). Not only does this record fucking rock like AC/DC (I am not kidding), but Dave Weinberg once again blows me way with his lyrical prowess. My vote for the best lyrics of the year. Check out the song "The Edge of Town": "The cul de sac jungle is a cruel place / it's a living rotting failure from a different age / and if you're looking for a place that dreams go to die / It's not in the city it's around the outside / You can mortgage your future for sun bleached purity / and accept the sterility in exchange for security / but no matter how many times you run from your fears / the same problems always reappear / Day after day it's all just decay / and the promised land just gets further away / On these dead lawns lie your father's dreams / White flight / White blight / White screams / On these dead lawns lie your mother's dreams." BAD RELIGION couldn't have written a better song about suburbia. My hats off to Dave and the rest of the crew for creating one of the sickest albums of the year.

Ever heard of POINTING FINGER? Yeah, neither had I until I got their new Transcend 7" on Commitment Records. This Portuguese band produced hands down the best 7" I reviewed this month. Yeah, so their name is cheesy as hell, and the guy kind of sounds like Ray Cappo during his stint on the Whiny Years. But who cares when the band fucking smokes like George Burns? This is one of the better straight edge bands coming out of Europe right now. If I were a label in the US, I would be tripping over myself to put something out by this band. Check them out, particularly this record. You won't be disappointed.

End Notes and What Not

So I wasn't able to interview DESPERATE MEASURES or FAR FROM BREAKING for *MRR*, however I did get a great interview from Dave Byrd and the rest of the SD crew while I was in San Jose. I am just waiting on them to send live pics. If anyone has some sick STRIKING DISTANCE pictures that they wouldn't mind lending me to accompany the interview, I would appreciate it. The sooner I get the pics, the sooner you get to read about Dave Byrd talk about his Masters Degree in Human Resources. Dave Byrd a "people person"? Who knew?

The new KNIFE FIGHT 7" should be coming out pretty soon on My War Records. Every time I see this band advertised, they mention ex-members of CARRY ON and SHARK ATTACK, but no mention of LIFES HALT. Which is funny considering that KNIFE FIGHT is not only made up of two LIFES HALT members, but one of them is none other than the Hottest Cali Stud, Crucial Chuck. In just listening to the demo, his presence on guitar cannot be denied. Check this band out if you're a fan of early POISON IDEA or NEGATIVE APPROACH. The cover art is being drawn by the guy who did the KILLERS and PUNCH IN THE FACE records. Should be as intense as Jon's ankle tattoo.

Well, that is about it for this month. Hardcore music should stay out of big business and in the streets where it belongs. Before you send those limited colored records and demos, you might want to email me at ih8thekids@hotmail.com.

You will sadly hear that a disaster has accompanied the commencement of an enterprise which you may have regarded with such evil forebodings. My first task is to warn you for your own welfare and the cataclysm due to the success of my undertaking.
—opening paragraph of *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelly

The Hasidim tell how when G-d made the human male, he left on the foreskin so the creation would be incomplete. It's up to humanity, says the tale, to finish itself.

That's such a beautiful story, I wonder if I too should leave on the foreskin. It's such a nice penis, it seems a pity to change it. I don't even know if Mom was a Jew.

Deciding against further trim, I carefully stitch the organ onto the body. There will be scars, I'm afraid. But at least he'll be able to pop a chubby.

That's the last step. I've completed my creature. Now it rises toward the lightning splitting the night sky. Gears whir. Slowly the table rises, my naked creation with it. Higher and higher to catch the spark that will give it life...

****

I created a monster!! Not a human one, of course. Not even a pieced-together human. But a monster just the same. How could I have imagined? One column. One off-hand remark

about my love of Negroes. One note about how Negro culture creates white culture in modern America. Just 17 kilobytes and POW! They flip the script.

Blame spills over me like Nickelodeon slime. Maybe I am to blame. But at least you should see how I *fought* the monster. How I tried to destroy my own creation. You've heard rumors from others. You *think* you know the story. Well, bust this:

It's Saturday morning. Early. That time before the numbers on the clock focus themselves. That time before creeping sobriety conquers the fluid pleasure of the night before. That time before any rightful person would awaken for anything other than expelling a liquid. The phone is ringing. The fuckin' phone. That two-way blight on humanity is invading my quality time. Still blinded by last night's Olde English 800, I slip from the bed to the floor. I crawl the agonizing three feet to the evil white plastic. I fumble. The receiver falls to the floor. All the better. I don't need to hold it. I can just lie here and gurgle into it.

"Mmmmmm..." I say. "Waddaya want?"

"It's me, you see. Tellin' you the way it's gonna be." comes the male verbalization from the other end.

"Mike?" I ask, recognizing the voice of my editor.

"Mike, Myke?" comes the reply. "It used to be Mike, Myke. Now it's a name I dislike, Myke. But I'm no predator. I'm the editor. I'm a poet and I know it. So I need a name like Blake-ah, Jake-ah. So you can call me Take-ah. But don't nap, this is rap, so I gotta bask in some vapahs. Not Jim Nabahs. More famous. Not Amos, but something like the city. Get the nitty? It's the gritty. So call me Gotta Take-ah P. Diddy."

I wonder if maybe what disturbed my sleep wasn't the phone, but a nightmare. Maybe I'm *still* sleeping. Maybe the god of charcoal filtration is attacking my brain.

"Do you know what time it is?" I ask, not knowing what time it is, but knowing it certainly is the wrong one.

"Time? Fine. Who cares about the time, Slime. The call is on my dime, Slime. Why fight, right? It's trite, right. See we been up all night, right. Re-readin.' You're leading. Learnin' what you said 'bout being white, right?"

My brainfog clears enough for me to make a full sentence. It is a question. Two questions. "What the fuck are you talking about? Are you referring to my *I Like Negroes* column?"

This time a female voice comes on the line. It's Arwen, the other half of my editor.

"You spot it. You got it. That's what we're talkin' about it..."

"Arwen," I say, interrupting her, "how'd you get on the line?"

"Why what's your bone of contention? I'm on the other extension. You feel a little tension..."

"Hold it! Hold it!" I shout into the phone. By this time I'm sitting upright on the floor. My brain is clear enough to converse, but I'm holding back a tremendous beershit building in my lower intestine.

Tightening my sphincter, I speak into the phone. "What is going on? When I said *I like Negroes,* I didn't mean we should *be* Negroes. I meant that people should be proud of their differences and not try to conform to the mainstream. You and I can't be Negroes any more than a mouse can be an elephant."

Arwen answers. "It ain't race, Ace. It's the taste, Ace. It's what you want that really matters. If you're not black, Jack. You're not whack, Jack. Take a look at Marshall Mathers. Now this punk junk. It's some skunk, punk. You talk about your elephant. I tell you fair. It's just not there. It's what you call irrelevant."

By this time, my double deuce juice is doin' a driveby in my stomach.

"I gotta go." I tell the pair. Hanging up the phone, I bail out and pinch some phat brown ones.

By now, you know the rest of the story. You've heard it through the grapevine or read it in the competition. This issue, the April issue, will be the last ever of *Maximum Rock'n'Roll.* Starting in May, we become *Maximum Hip and Hop.*

Since I rarely write about music, that's not a big problem for me. Other columnists won't have it so easy. What will Felix Havoc have to say about Queen Latifah? Besides, that isn't the main point.

What is?

If you have a zine with a focus, you'd better lose yourself in that focus, don't choke us. You own it, you better never let it go. You only get one shot. Do not miss your chance to blow. This opportunity comes once in a lifetime, yo.

Is that clear enough? No? Ok, let me try it again.

MRR'S DECISION TO BECOME MHH IS A BIG MISTAKE.

Can I make it any clearer? However well intentioned, it's just bad. There are enough hip hop magazines. There are enough rap-related niches already filled. Can't we have our own little world of interest? Just because *Punk Planet* changed its name to *Fear of a Punk Planet,* doesn't mean that we have to go one step further. Because *Heart Attack* is now *Heart Wilding* doesn't mean we have to worry about being last on the bus. It doesn't matter if we're the *only* ones on the bus—as long as it's the right bus.

I'm off the john. Wiped cleanish, with that satisfied feeling that comes after a good beershit. Ready to do combat, I call the *MRR* mansion in San Francisco. Someone picks up the phone. A voice neither Arwen or Mike answers. In the background, a CD plays a female saying something about *flip it and reverse it.*

"We got the hip and the hop and we ain't gonna stop..." says the voice on the phone.

"Lefty?" I ask. "Is that you?"

"Lefty was before," comes the reply, "but I ain't no whore. Lefty was hefty, but berefty. But hey, from today, I'm def. Def Left."

"Not you too!" I cry, my tears audibly dripping into the phone.

"What about your politics?" I ask him.

"That's no problem. I can solve 'em. And still fight George Bush. Knock him on his tush."

"That's awful," I tell him. "You can't use *tush* in a hip hop song."

He doesn't hear me. Instead he keeps going. "It's Dick Cheney and Giuliani, sittin' eatin' their spaghetti. At this hour, they got the power. But soon they'll be pissing in the shower."

I cut in again. "That makes no sense. *Everybody* pisses in the shower. What does that mean? And Giuliani doesn't rhyme with Cheney or spaghetti."

"Wadaya mean?" he says. "They both end in *i,* don't they?"

I roll my eyes audibly into the phone.

He continues, "And Ashcroft, he's too soft. He'll be eatin' lead and then he'll be dead."

"Okay, okay," I tell him. "Let me talk to Arwen."

"Sure Myke, hold on. I think they're chillin' by the pond."

The phone goes dead... except for the CD in the background that's saying "*Gimme all your numbers so I can phone ya. Your girl acting stank than call me ov-ah. Not on the bed, lay me on your sofa.*"

Not bad stuff, when you think about it. I like this layin' on the sofa stuff. If she looks like she sounds, layin's not a bad idea... No! I won't lose my resolve! Besides what the fuck does "pond" mean? There's no pond by the Maxipad. It must be hip hop talk. Maybe it means toilet. I donno. I'm gonna have to learn a whole new language.

Arwen picks up the phone. "How's my Captain Save-A-Ho?" she says.

"What are you talking about?" I ask. "Can't you stop this for a minute and talk straight?"

"Why you bein' so cat, Matt?" she says. "Ain't you readin' the Koran? Get with the program. The true you ain't gonna be black leather. Get with the Fubu. It's the new you. Not a friend that'll only do fair weather."

I give up. I hang up. I wish I could make her shut up. I fucked up. I'm a schmuck, yup. I got me the former-punk terror. I gotta end now. Eat some dog chow. I ask you to be a bad news bearer. You gotta write 'em. Don't delight 'em. And tell 'em this whole thing's in error.

[If you want to keep *MRR* punk, send you protest email to: maximumrnr@mindspring.com. Tell 'em you think there's still a place in the world for a *real* punkrock magazine.]

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@mykelboard.com) will receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.*]

--> Yeah! dept: The Associated Press reports that a Finnish court fined a driver for doing 46 mph in an 30 mph zone. The fine was for $103,000. Are the Finns' that concerned about speeding? Nope! It's just that Finnish law defines traffic fines as a percentage of income. The rich creep who was speeding earned $5.2 million last year.

Those Finns do it right. The *NY Times* reports that the Finns have the most lenient jails in Europe and maybe the world. TVs in each cell, no bars. Cells like tiny hotel rooms. And what does it get? The lowest crime rate in Europe! Ah, those Finns.

-->*Barnes and Nobelization dept:* I've often written how the biggest problem with today's homo movement is the desire to be straight. That means integrating homotude into everyday globalization. No more uniqueness, only a vague mushy *us*.

Ted from See Hear forwarded me some email about the closing of The Oscar Wilde Bookshop. It was the oldest homo bookstore in the country.

"I have lost a quarter of a million dollars over the last six years," its owner, Larry Lingle, said. "And I just can't take it anymore."

Opened in 1967, The Oscar Wilde Bookshop was on Christopher Street for many years. The *NY Times* article says with some accuracy,

> *Some said that the failure of gay bookstores in Manhattan was actually a sign of the gay movement's success in making gay issues mainstream, which would be in keeping with what Oscar Wilde wrote in "Lady Windemere's Fan": "In this world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it."*

-->*If he finds it, he should help GWB find his dept.*

This is probably from Kesha, who contacts me less than she used to:

In Ohio, an unidentified man in his late twenties walked into a police station with a 9-inch wire protruding from his forehead. He calmly asked officers to give him an X-ray to help him find his brain, which he claimed had been stolen. Police were shocked to learn that the man had drilled a 6-inch deep hole in his skull with a Black & Decker power drill and had stuck the wire in to try and find the missing brain.

--> *Wish they were foxier dept:*

This is from the March 1995 issue of *Scientific American*. It's about a monkey called the Bonobo. I only wish it were about a certain other animal.

The species is best characterized as female-centered and egalitarian and as one that substitutes sex for aggression. Whereas in most other species sexual behavior is a fairly distinct category, in the bonobo it is part and parcel of social relations--and not just between males and females.

Bonobos engage in sex in virtually every partner combination (although such contact among close family members may be suppressed). And sexual interactions occur more often among bonobos than among other primates. Despite the frequency of sex, the bonobo's rate of reproduction in the wild is about the same as that of the chimpanzee. A female gives birth to a single infant at intervals of between five and six years. So bonobos share at least one very important characteristic with our own species, namely, a partial separation between sex and reproduction.

This finding commands attention because the bonobo shares more than 98 percent of our genetic profile, making it as close to a human as, say, a fox is to a dog.

-->*So that's where they went dept:*

Interested in finding out what happened to those promos you sent out with no reviews or airplay? You can buy 'em back at www.gemm.com, the best place on the web to find used CDs/Records... anything. It's where I sell all my promo stuff. It looks like everyone else does too. I bought my first 7" back from Sam McPheeters! It's a great place to ditch records if you need cash.

-->*Good things about checkpoints dept:*

The Door Magazine reports that cops charged Rabbi Samuel Greenbaum of Detroit with DWI. He refused to take a breathalyzer test and was pulled in for questioning. Good thing too. The good rabbi was on his way to perform a circumcision on a local kid. Is *that* the finishing G-d intended?

There's two great brand new punk rock bands coming out of NYC that I'm excited about. One of them is the LITTLE KILLERS. The Little Killers are so great, I predict that their debut album, soon to be released on Crypt Records, will make the top ten list of anyone who hears it! These two gals and a guy have a straightforward punk rock sound. It reminds my boyfriend and me of the early punk rock of the Australian group the SAINTS, because they have the same kind of driving throb as on the Saints' most recognized song, "I'm Stranded." But the Little Killers sound more original and are more fun! When we mentioned the Saints to Andy, the singer/guitarist of the band, I was surprised to learn that he'd never even *heard* anything by them, and I thought that made it all the more cool!

Another really good new band you'll probably be hearing about is the TIE REDS. They're two gals and two guys who also play in a Killed By Death classic punk style. They have a powerhouse of a drummer who really propels this bass/guitar/organ driven group. Everybody in the group sings, although the guy who is the guitarist takes most of the lead vocals. The organ player is also interesting, because when she's not playing her primitive gararge-esque keys, she does backup percussion. Both of these groups play a lot in a new scene that seems to be developing around a series of events called Dot Dash (named after a very early song by WIRE from the late 70s, back when they were still a great band.) Tom Hyland, the ex-PRIMATE-FIVE drummer from Seattle, moved to New York City some years ago, and now he's setting up shows for these terrific and promising new bands... as well as other bands who play punk rock and/or garage punk. It's cool to see this scene-within-a-scene starting to take shape. You can learn more about these bands at the Dot Dash website, http://www.dotdashnyc.com/ and while you're checking it out, may I also suggest to take a glance at my pal Justina's website. She has taken some great photos of the Little Killers and the Tie Reds as well as many other NYC bands that I love to go to see, like the SPITOONS, ROTGUTTER, MZ. PAKMAN, the YAMS, SATO & JONNY, SEA MONKEYS, LONE WOLVES, SHEMPS, OSCAR & THE PIDGIN SISTERS, plus out-of-town bands that have toured NYC, like the BRIEFS, HATEBOMBS, KAISERS, etc. Justina's site is at http://www.whatawaytodie.com/

Now on to some political crap: the whole space shuttle disaster is being milked by Bush to get people to go along with his religious bullshit. If you heard his little speech about the Columbia, you know that he kept mentioning God and quoting the bible. In fact, in *every* speech this guy makes, he has to make sure to mention God. It's appalling. It's as if whenever Bush is given something to read by one of his speech writers, he must be sending it back with little post-it notes that say: "There's not enough about *God* in here—rewrite it!" I firmly believe Bush is a dangerous religious fanatic. In addition, Bush's State of the Union address was a pack of lies, and disgusting ones at that.

"To lift the standards of our public schools, we achieved historic education reform which must now be carried out in every school and in every classroom so that every child in American can read and learn and succeed in life."

This is a lie. Bush has done nothing—zero, zilch—to help the school system. The only thing that Bush has pushed is to create a "voucher" system so that parents can remove their kids from "failing" schools, and put them into private (and especially) religious schools. This does nothing to help the *public* school system. Bush is quite willing to see that rot. If he'd have his way, there would be no public schooling anymore. The "Privatization" of everything from education, health, and social services is what Bush wants.

"Our first goal is clear: We must have an economy that grows fast enough to employ every man and woman who seeks a job." "After recession, terrorist attacks, corporate scandals and stock market declines, our economy is recovering."

Our economy is not recovering. In order for there to be a recovery we have to see figures that indicate new businesses are starting, established businesses are flourishing, and the numbers of unemployed are going down. New businesses are *not* starting. Established businesses are struggling, and more people are being laid off and/or on unemployment than ever before. It was not a high profile news item (because there is no longer any domestic news coverage—just 24-hour war propaganda), but Congress had to extend unemployment benefits for another three months to the unemployed. Clearly…these people are *not* finding new jobs.

"Jobs are created when the economy grows; the economy grows when Americans have more money to spend and invest; and the best and fairest way to make sure Americans have that money is not to tax it away in the first place. I am proposing that all the income tax reductions set for 2004 and 2006 be made permanent and effective this year. And under my plan, as soon as I've signed the bill, this extra money will start showing up in workers' paychecks."

Income tax reductions will *not* help the unemployed. Who *has* income? Not the unemployed. (Although if the unemployed in

SUBTERRANEAN
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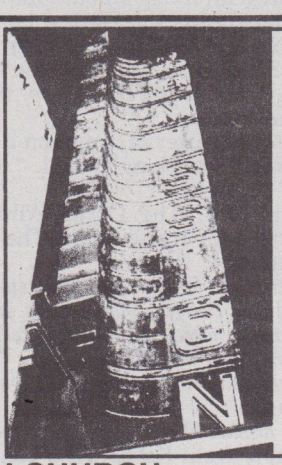

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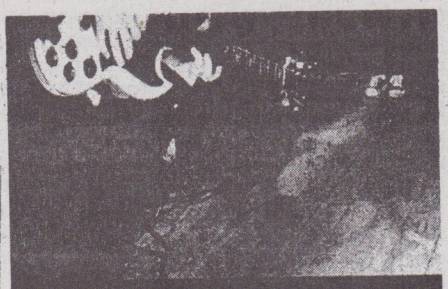

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question are collecting unemployment benefits, they *do* have to pay income tax on it. Explain that one! The government grants this money to the unemployed, and then forces them to pay part of it right back to where it came from. Why not just withhold the tax? Or simply not charge the unemployed with income tax in the first place.) As for the notion that lower taxes will create new jobs...says who? This has been the lie the Republicans have tried to cram down our throats for decades. It's outright dishonesty designed to get votes. I'm no economist, but it doesn't take one to see that when Bush talks about lowering taxes he's speaking of tax cuts to help the rich get richer. The extraordinarily wealthy are Bush's buddies.

The best way to address the deficit and move toward a balanced budget is to encourage economic growth and to show some spending discipline in Washington, DC. We must work together to fund only our most important priorities."

Important priorities to whom? How much do you imagine the proposed *war* is going to cost? Why is a war a priority when weapons inspectors have been over in Iraq for months and only found a few empty and forgotten missiles in a warehouse? It has been reported that the Pentagon is planning for the air force and navy to launch approximately 300 to 400 missiles that are *not* empty at Iraq on "A-Day" (Air Strikes Day). That's more missiles than were launched during Bush Sr.'s entire 1991 Gulf war. Bush Jr. wants to drop 400 missiles just on day *one* of the new war. That's Bush's idea of "spending discipline." Unnecessarily bombing the Iraqi civilians into oblivion does not make Bush seem like much of a spend- thrift to me.

"For many people, medical care costs too much, and many have no coverage at all. These problems will not be solved with a nationalized health care system that dictates coverage and rations care. Instead, we must work toward a system in which all Americans have a good insurance policy, choose their own doctors, and seniors and low-income Americans receive the help they need."

Here we have another *big lie*. Bush says a nationalized health care system will not solve the health care crisis. Well if the crisis is that too many people cannot get health care, then a single payer, national health care system, such as the kind that exists in *all* of the other industrialized nations on this globe, is *exactly* the thing that will solve the problem. National health care for all Americans would mean that no citizen would be without health coverage. All health care would then be a *right* for every American, not a *privilege* of only those who can get good coverage. Notice that Bush flatly states that national health care will not solve the problem but, then doesn't offer any explanation of *why* it wouldn't solve the problem. He only vaguely alludes to something about a national health care system dictating coverage and rationing care. There is no reason why a single payer system would have to do that. All you'd need to do in a single payer system is go to the doctor of your choice, show some sort of identification, and the government would take care of paying the bill. This is how they do it in Canada, Germany, Norway, etc., and they don't get poor health care. Health insurance is a scam. You know it, I know it, and most of all, *he* knows it. Half of the time when you actually have a serious medical problem, insurance will only cover part of the bill. Even the part of the bill that the insurance company pays for has to be wrestled out of them. They try every trick in the book to worm their way out of paying it. Finally, when and if they *do* pay out, your insurance bill goes up. *So what were you paying all of this money into the plan for anyway?* Bush is a good buddy of the wealthy insurance industry, the big drug companies, and the corporate medical industry. This is why he wants to keep the current status quo in place, no matter how many Americans sicken and die. That's why Bush made sure to say the following:

"To improve our health care system, we must address one of the prime causes of higher cost: the constant threat that physicians and hospitals will be unfairly sued. Because of excessive litigation, everybody pays more for health care, and many parts of America are losing fine doctors. No one has ever been healed by a frivolous lawsuit; I urge the Congress to pass medical liability reform."

So here we see where the true "compassion" of this President lies. It's not with people who need health care, nor with victims of malpractice, but with the wealthy medical industrialists. Of course Bush would like nothing better than to dismiss all malpractice claims as "frivolous." He wants his buddies to be accountable to no one. He is urging Congress to *block* your right to sue if you or your loved ones are given poor health care which results in further injury, illness, or death. So clearly the so-called "reform" that Bush wants is an obscene perversion of the word "reform." A reform is supposed to make things better for people, not worse. Will Congress pass this repulsive "reform?" Well, considering that the Majority is now Republican, what do *you* think?

"Tonight I'm proposing $1.2 billion in research funding so that America can lead the world in developing clean, hydrogen-powered automobiles. A simple chemical reaction between hydrogen and oxygen generates energy, which can be used to power a car, producing only water, not exhaust fumes."

Yeah right, and I'm JR Ewing! Let's face it, US presidents have been blowing this sorta smoke since the first big energy crisis in the 1970s. It's all talk, no action. Perhaps a hydrogen car may even be possible, but I'd be willing to bet that Mr. Texas-Oil-Man would see the reality of such a scientific breakthrough as a direct conflict of interest. Bush is merely proposing to throw this $1.2 billion into the usual fraudulent and deliberately unproductive, half-assed "research" that is totally sponsored by the oil and automotive industries! Bush is not talking about actual basic science, unencumbered by corporate ties and corporate lies. This way, years from now, the oil and auto industry can say, "You see? We *tried* to make a hydrogen car and we failed, but at least we *proved* that hydrogen powered cars aren't feasible." Yes, there goes more of your money, flushed down the toilet.

"I urge you to pass both my faith-based initiative and the Citizen Service Act to encourage acts of compassion that can transform America one heart and one soul at a time. "

If there is one thing I despise more than anything it is Bush's "faith-based initiative." Here we go again with his constant attacks on the separation of church and state. Bush wants to give *your tax dollars* to these religious organizations with no strings attached. The "faith-based initiative" does not hold these religious groups to any fiscal accountability. Any such groups can *say* the money is going to the homeless, or to sick orphans... but how do you know it's true? Bush's attitude is that since they are "faith-based" people allegedly providing the services, then they must be telling the truth. There is nothing to prevent people in need of social services from being subjected to proselytizing and other religious brainwashing. The needy want a bowl of soup, a place to come in from the cold, medical treatment if they are ill, reproductive and sexual information, and drug counseling...they ought not to be subjected to the dogma of any particular religion to get this help. That's like blackmail. In addition, Bush's initiative permits the religious institutions to discriminate in their acts of charity. This was clearly evidenced here in New York when the Salvation Army refused to offer services to any gay and lesbian victims and their partners after the September 11 attacks. When Bush proposes to give your money to "faith-based" charities, it's because everything these charities would be doing are things that in a decent nation the *government* should be doing. But Bush doesn't want to bother with helping US citizens in need. There's no time for that when you're planning to bomb the world. So instead, he'll shift *his* responsibility to the "faith based" groups to take it off his hands. He'll dangle your money in front of these religious institutions and get *them* to compete with each other for our greenbacks. The fringe benefit will be that any charities that are *not* religious will be driven right out of business. I suppose Bush feels that it serves 'em right! It's their punishment for not being "with God."

"Another cause of hopelessness is addiction to drugs." "Too many Americans in search of treatment cannot get it. So tonight I propose a new $600 million program to help an additional 300,000 Americans receive treatment over the next three years. Our nation is blessed with recovery programs that do amazing work. One of them is found at the Healing Place Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. A man in the program said, "God does miracles in people's lives, and you never think it could be you."

Let me pause for a moment so I can retch before I continue. BLEUUAGHHAAAHHHGRGLE! Ug. That's better. Look, you won't find anyone more straight edge, anti-drug than me, but this almost makes me wanna throw myself into an opium den just so I can blot out Bush's sickening holier-than-thou platitudes. The drug problem in America will not be solved by "miracles from God," and Bush is not interested in real treatment programs that work. If Bush really cared about the drug problem he would do tangible things like set up government-funded drug treatment centers and needle exchange programs. Here again we see the filthy pig Bush just trying to pass off the social problems *he* should be dealing with on to a bunch of holy-rollers with the ulterior motive of a religious agenda.

"We must not overlook the weakest among us. I ask you to protect infants at the very hour of their birth and end the practice of partial-birth

abortion. And because no human life should be started or ended as the object of an experiment, I ask you to set a high standard for humanity and pass a law against all human cloning."

I swear, what a goddam fuck this maniac is! Everyone knows that the so-called "partial-birth abortion" rhetoric is a red herring because the procedure is used in only a tiny fraction of all abortion cases. Even then, only in a dire emergency when the life and health of the woman is at grave risk. As for the cloning issue, if "no human life should be started or ended as the object of an experiment" then let's just ban all in-vitro fertilization right now! Let's ban sperm banks, and fertilization medications, and Viagra, and birth control pills, embryo transfers, and surrogate mothering. Let's *kill* all of the people involved with and born from such procedures, because all of them are examples of lives that were started from experimental science. Religious fanatics always despise science, and Bush is no exception. Obviously Bush is just itching to interfere with all aspects of our reproductive lives. Get ready, people. Bush is going to send anti-abortion Judges to the Supreme Court. He's already appointing another religious fanatic to be in charge of the Food and Drug Administration, named Dr. David Hager. He is anti-choice, and so staunchly anti-birth control that he refuses to prescribe birth control pills or any other contraceptives to unmarried women. He is the author of insane books like *As Jesus Cares For Women* and *Stress and the Woman's Body*, in which he stated that the treatment for women with premenstrual syndrome should be to read the Bible and pray.

"We have confronted, and will continue to confront, HIV/AIDS in our own country. And to meet a severe and urgent crisis abroad, tonight I propose the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, a work of mercy beyond all current international efforts to help the people of Africa."

I'm not going to get into in again about everything Bush is *not* doing to "confront" the AIDS plague. Needless to say, the only thing he "confronts" are the only proven strategies and tactics that will actually *end* the plague. Read my past columns of *MRR* for more info about how at every step of the way Bush has been obstructing AIDS prevention and treatment. It is especially offensive that Bush has the gall to say that he wants to "help" Africa, when he has been working with pharmaceutical corporations to *prevent* Africa from producing its own generic versions of antiviral drugs and opportunistic infection treatments. To use litigation to dictate that African nations must *buy US drugs at prices they cannot afford*, is not "helping"—it's economic blackmail.

"Iraqi refugees tell us how forced confessions are obtained: by torturing children while their parents are made to watch. International human rights groups have cataloged other methods used in the torture chambers of Iraq: electric shock, burning with hot irons, dripping acid on the skin, mutilation with electric drills, cutting out tongues, and rape. If this is not evil, then evil has no meaning. "

While this is probably not a lie, it is certainly disingenuous for Bush to mention it as a reason why the USA should attack Iraq when so many other nations who are supposedly "our friends" do exactly the same things. Iraq has the death penalty for "women who disgrace the family" as do other Middle Eastern nations where Islam is the primary religion. I have to admit that as far as I'm concerned, all nations who go around murdering, torturing, and committing acts of genocide are in need of a regime change. On the other hand, I have moved from a position where I was not sure that I was against a war because I cannot accept a regime that routinely kills and imprisons gay men, to being 1000% against it. I still am not in favor of allowing any regime that commits acts of genocide to continue. Disarming Iraq may prevent it from attacking neighboring countries like Kuwait again, but how would that prevent Iraq from continuing to commit genocide within its borders? But Bush does not want war to avert human rights abuses. He cares diddley-squat about human rights in *any* country, including our own. No, Bush doesn't want a war to help the Iraqi people remove a vicious dictator. He doesn't even want to attack Iraq because the words "attack" and "Iraq" rhyme.

So why *does* Bush wish to attack Iraq? It has nothing to do with the so-called weapons of mass destruction that the UN Inspectors cannot locate. Bush wants to attack Iraq because he wants to finish the job his daddy did not finish. Bush wants to attack Iraq because he is a Texas oil man and he wants to protect US oil interests. Bush wants to attack Iraq because part of the "reconstruction" will be to create a oil pipeline in Iraq. Bush wants to attack Iraq because he personally does not have to fight, (nor did he when he was of the age to serve) and he doesn't care what happens to our boys and ladies on the ground who will be forced to do his dirty work. Bush want's to attack Iraq because the deaths of innocent Iraqi people don't mean anything to him. Bush wants to attack Iraq because when his father did it, Bush Sr. had the highest poll ratings of any president ever. Bush wants to attack Iraq because he does not wish to make the same error his father did, by finishing the war before the election. Bush wants to attack Iraq so he can have four more years in office to protect his own selfish family interests.

Iraq does not pose a military threat to the US so long as we stay out of Saddam's backyard. Bush won't do that because he is an imperialist who believes the US has the *right* to go stomping around the world wherever, and whenever we want to. There's no USSR anymore to keep the USA's big stick in check, so let's prove we are a dominator society who must dominate. Like animals. Yes, Saddam is a dictator. There are dictators all over the world. As long as the USA continues to create dictatorships abroad there will be dictators. Some of these dictators *will* always come back to bite the hands that once fed it. The USA's hands.

Dictators who commit genocide *should* be brought down, but how? I believe that there should be a United Nations world court where the leaders of nations who commit genocide should be tried. Yes, the UN needs to be made much more effective. This is not impossible. Eleanor Roosevelt got the Universal Declaration on Human Rights adopted by all the Nations of the UN a long time ago, ya know. All that the UN needs to do ensure that the regulations of this document are implemented. If not...then the national leader who breaks those laws must go before the court. Simple as that. If the National leader *refuses* to go before the Court, he will be tried in absentia. Then, if convicted, and if the people of the nation in question won't or can't turn the dictator in, only *then* would a UN military force remove the genocidal dictator by force. Not the USA alone. As it stands now, however, Bush is yakkity-yakking about "going it alone" and using words too big for him like "unilateralism." Bush is saying things like "with the help of our closest ally, Tony Blair..." as if war is some sort of fucking *fraternity*, where "brothers" help each other out to achieve their own self-interests and damn everyone else.

Please understand...I'm not of the opinion that wars are always avoidable...but before you put any people in a situation like that I want the US Government that supposedly "represents us" to be *damn* sure that they have exhausted every possible solution before doing that. Bush does not act like a man trying to do this. He acts like an impatient baby who is angry at the UN for not supporting his war plans. The Saudis are trying to broker a deal where Saddam is exiled...and Bush gets angry because it's another plausible option for peace, that he just doesn't want to have to deal with. Why should he, when reaching for a gun to solve a crisis is the easiest and quickest way to enforce power, right?

If one thing is true, I think it's this...the less bloodshed, the better. Think about it like this, Castro has been down in Cuba all this time and we haven't bothered with him since the 60s. Isolation is effective in stopping bloodshed. Maybe it isn't the best way for the Cuban people to live, but at least we aren't at war with them...and slowly, they are moving towards democracy... China too... because the people see the benefits it brings. I suspect that maybe if the USA just allowed other nations to live their lives without interference, people in other lands would look at what the USA as an example and try to adopt a way of life that seems to be better than what they've got. But it's the interference that causes the resentment. Pointing a gun in the face of these people doesn't win them over very well. Osama didn't attack because we just sat around in shopping malls minding our own business. Saddam doesn't have weapons because he's afraid of Sweden meddling or attacking. It's because they see the USA as a big bully empire that needs to be brought down. Everyone knows that the Roman Empire fell. Middle Easterners also remember that their own Ottoman Empire fell. The world has become a cycle of men attempting to build domineering empires and knocking each other down. As Riane Eilser writes in a history book entitled *The Chalice and the Blade*, we live in a dominator society, not a partnership society. But which would you rather live in?

If Saddam Hussein has weapons to defend himself, and we know that he does, is it wrong to expect a man to defend himself against an enemy that he views as on the offensive? Bush is not defending himself. He is on the offensive and is provoking conflict. Bush may imagine himself as defending himself, probably because it is too painful for him to look at himself as he really is. Attacking nations is not my idea of what the USA should be about. The USA should be about democracy, but I think you cannot force democracy abroad. People have to decide that they want it. For a

long while the American Colonialists were happy to be ruled by the British monarchy. The USA happened because when people decided that they wanted independent, democratic self-rule. The Middle East is not like that yet. I can't tell you how many conversations I've had with an Egyptian fellow I know named Hassan, in which he has told me the problem with the USA is that there is "too much democracy." This is coming from a man from Egypt, one of the most westernized of the Arab nations, who has lived here since the early 80s. I remember when he told me, "Here in America you have too much freedom of the press. If the Egyptian president had sex with Monica Lewinski, no one would have ever heard about it. Everyone in Egypt is laughing at your President." An "activist democracy" is one thing... but you can't expect people who don't want it to make it work. Democracy doesn't really even work here! Bush *lost* the election and then manipulated the justice system to put himself in office. How is that different than the conniving tricks Hitler did to put himself in power?

Riane Eisler writes of the Minoan period of Crete as a past golden age of *gender equality*, and if you read Eisler's evidence as presented in *The Chalice and the Blade*, you'll see that it is undeniably compelling. No one said a perfect society has ever existed, but whether it once existed or never really existed, the *idea* of it is something to strive for. Do you really think we'd be having these sorts of problems if by magic, every *man* in any arena of governmental power in this world today were suddenly replaced by a *woman* who believed in partnership rather than domination? You know the disproportionate degree to which men are in control. If these men with their heads stuck in domination mode weren't building empires, there would be no Empires to fall. There were Empires that once seemed unstoppable and existed for thousands of years, as opposed to the puny 200+ years of the USA's existence. Rome's fall was not worth the Dark Ages, in my mind, and of all the travesties of history, the destruction of the Library at Alexandria was probably one of the worst. It set science, art, mathematics, philosophy, and intellectualism back for hundreds of years. But, let us not forget what sorts of men are openly disdainful of intellectualism. Hitler was one, religious fanatics like Falwell and Robertson are others.. .and gee, um, uh, *Bush* is another. He often has publicly remarked that he dislikes people he views to be "intellectual snobs" and he still resents that there were people at Andover and Yale who were considered to be smarter while he was considered to be a mediocre student. Bush rationalizes his lack of intelligence away when he says "common sense" is more important to have. (Same views as Hitler.) When Texas test scores were lower than the rest of the nation, he simply had the Dept of Education in Texas *change* the tests to make them easier. This is a man some dare to call an "Education" president.

Just because I'm anti-Bush, that doesn't mean I'm pro-Hussein. I'm still into the idea of taking a very proactive stance towards the peaceful removal of Hussein, with humanitarian aid to the Iraqis, assistance in "nation building" (that awful phrase that Bush is so very opposed to) and working with Iraq and its neighbors toward stability in the region. Bush's government does not want stability in the Middle East. They know instability serves their manipulative goals better. You may not believe this, but I think about the guys and gals in military service very often, even though gays and lesbians are not allowed to serve. (Except that now the Military are talking about lifting the ban for the duration of a potential Iraqi war. I guess homosexual people aren't worthy enough to serve in peacetime but are useful enough as cannon-fodder.) I remember being very fearful for the few people I knew in the military, when Bush was first (cough) (ahem) "elected." I remember thinking, "I know one way or another this guy will plunge us into war." I didn't even need to glance at a crystal ball.

I'm of a generation was too young to remember Vietnam. However, when I see CNN commentators express the idea that the people of the USA should resent presidents who involve us in miserable long wars, like Johnson/Nixon, and respect Presidents who start "short, fun" wars like Bush Sr. and Bush Jr. I find it, quite frankly *bizarre*. What difference does the length of a war make to the loved ones of a soldier who was lost in one? Especially when we don't need to start this particular war, when there are so many other options to deal with this situation. No I'm not a warmonger and not exactly a peacenik, but I have yet to hear anyone explain why we must "begin bombing in five minutes." Does anyone have a compelling argument that can assure me that all of the peaceful options have been exhausted? Bush goes on about the Axis of Evil and we ignorant Americans all shudder with fear. Never mind the fact that an Axis is a group of united governments in a war. Italy, Germany, and Japan were an Axis. Iran, Iraq, and North Korea are not. Iran and Iraq are bitter enemies and have been since the days when they were known as Persia and Babylon, and North Korea has nothing to do with either of them. The only thing these nations have is common is that they don't cower to Bush's wishes. Therefore, to Bush, they are the Axis of Evil.

Some of us don't buy Bush's stupid, simplistic words, or salivate at the prospect of war like Pavlov dogs every time we hear the world "evil." So what is the answer? War? Well, war is usually the bully's answer. Let a bully beat you up and the next thing you know there are twenty bullies ready to cream you after school. But, every war need not be fought with guns and bombs.

Remember the cold war? We won.

But as for Bush, and his simplistic Good Vs. Evil/God Vs. Satan religious extremism, perhaps the Iraqis had the right idea that poetic justice was being done when they said that God was punishing Bush for his aggression by bringing the Columbia Space Shuttle down. After all, Bush claims to be a "Christian," which is defined as one who follows Jesus Christ's example. Yet Jesus Christ never raised a sword in war against anyone. Jesus never committed a violent act in his whole life. When he learned people were out to kill him, he *could* have urged his followers to defend him by staging a armed revolt. Some of them even volunteered to do it. But, unlike Bush, Jesus did not ask the people he led to wage war in his name. So, if Bush were really the religious man that he says he is, and if he thinks that Jesus was God incarnated as a man, shouldn't he be following the example of the man that he can't give a speech without mentioning?

Next issue: Phil Spector shocker!

In the January 2003 issue (#236), I shared the story of my daughter's weaning. A few more months of her off my boob, and I've got more to say about it.

I nursed her for two and a half years. So from the time she was born until she weaned, a lot of myself had been put on hold. I realize that a lot of myself would have been put on hold regardless of my choice to breastfeed or bottle-feed, but I know that my choice to breastfeed for as long as I did (FYI: worldwide average age of weaning is four years, three months) kept me more physically and emotionally attached to parenting and more detached from the activities that make me feel like me ... band practice, playing shows, silkscreening, making jewelry, zine-related reading and writing, and of course, late night carousing.

So after two and a half years of being a parent, I finally feel like I'm able to reclaim parts of myself that make me more than Emma-Joy's mommy. I'm in a band or two again and I really didn't realize how much I missed it until I started playing again. I can't say I was unhappy during the last two and a half years, but I am so much happier on a daily basis now that I've got regular practices and shows again!

And I've even been able to bring Emma-Joy to the shows that are outside because they're not as loud and to the inside ones that are smoke-free and acoustic (or not, if she'll keep her ear plugs in). In the past, I was more reluctant to bring her with me to shows because she was clingier when she was still nursing and I couldn't just enjoy the show; I'd be attending to her needs, including her demands to nurse. But now that she's not demanding the boob anymore, it's really fun to bring her along.

She gets a kick out of entertaining everyone, pre-show style on the microphone with her ABC's and singing "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star." She dances while we play, periodically comes up to give me leg hugs, and claps after every song with a big "Yeah Mommy!" to boot. And if she needs something while I'm playing, she's got her daddy or a friend she's comfortable with—she's never unattended. When she was still nursing, it was definitely harder for someone else to meet her needs if I were around; I had the milk-filled boobs, they didn't.

In addition to weaning bringing changes related to me being able to reclaim more of myself, weaning brought about a big hormonal shift. (That's because the positive feedback loop of lactation is almost entirely hormonal.) The demand stopped, so the supply

stopped too. The down side of the hormonal shift was that a big, bad yeast infection thought it had been invited to my body. No one told me that would happen and I was bummed! Not until it happened did I read in a breastfeeding book that I could expect one when I stopped lactating. Another weird thing that happens is that you shed more hair than normal and you get teenage sized zits for a while. But there's a positive that far outweighs those three negatives combined ... your pre-birth sex drive returns immediately! (The same hormones that induce lactation suppress ovulation and desire for sex.)

Yes, horny in spite of the yeasty beast, geriatric style hair loss, and a pimply face is a much, much better way to feel. I figure that the time I had been spending on nursing can now be spent on getting it on. Just like playing in a band again has been keeping me happy, so has sexual prowess. And when I'm happy, I'm a better mom.

As always, punkparents get in touch.
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Part 2 of this month's column was contributed by a brand-new punkdaddy, Jon Gonzales. (His contact info. is at the end of the column.) When he got in touch, I immediately recruited him to contribute—in the almost three years I've been doing this column, only two other dad voices have been heard. Lots of moms come out of the woodwork, where are more of you dads?

And stay tuned—the next month's columns will include the Anarchist Babysitting Collective (ABC) and going on tour with your kid(s)!

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As I am writing this column, my son Evan has just turned one month, eighteen hours old. The first month has been a wild ride.

Let's start with the delivery. I was at my job listening to a combination of SEVERED HEAD OF STATE and EXCRUCIATING TERROR when my wife (who shall be referred to from here on out as Drea) called to let me know her contractions were getting stronger and longer. Anyone who has had a baby or attended a child birthing class knows that this is the point to either panic or reflect peacefully. (Try telling your significant other to reflect peacefully while she's having a contraction.)

I cancel my work for the rest of the day as well as cancel my other two jobs. (I work with adults in transitional living overnight, and prior to that, I worked with Special Olympics. Upon arriving home I find that Drea is relaxing comfortably. She tells me the contractions have stopped. I then call my two jobs and tell them that I will be in this evening. A half hour later, the contractions begin again. This leads me to call work again and tell them I won't be in.

Needless to say, a short time later, we are headed for the hospital. We arrive at the hospital, check in, and wait. (I waited, she labored.) Six hours later, the doctors are talking Cesarean because the baby turned into breach position. Drea is calm. I am calm on the outside, but on the inside ... chaos. I remember back to Naomi Wolf's book, *Misconceptions*, where Naomi talks about hospitals doing Cesareans because they get more money for the procedure. Also, Drea has to be knocked out for the procedure because of a medical condition, thus I am not allowed to be in the room when the procedure is done. (I just realized that by saying 'procedure' I am belittling what is a major fucking surgery. Let the record show that from here on out, "procedure" will be referred to as "a major fucking surgery.")

They have a special waiting room for family members located right next to the neo-natal ICU. They love to add stress at the hospital. Considering, though, that a baby is more likely to need neo-natal ICU after the mother undergoes a major fucking surgery, does in some ways ease my mind. Thirty minutes after Drea went in, the nurses come out with a healthy baby Evan. (Sidenote here ... We found out later that not only was Evan breach, but he had also moved down into the birth canal. No one notified the on-call surgeon of this. My mother-in-law heard the on-call surgeon yelling at the people in charge of giving him information on the patient.)

Post-op, Drea was in an amusing mood. When she came to, I said, "Honey, the baby is doing fine." To which she replied, "I had a baby?"

The rest of the hospital stay was a whirlwind of guests and broken rest. Drea got morphine, and I got a piece of shit cot that had bars which managed to grate into my back, side, or stomach just about the time I would be ready to fall asleep.

Three and a half days later, we got to go home. Sometime during our hospital stay, we had agreed to stay with Drea's mom. At first I was resistant, saying we needed to learn to take care of the baby on our own. After one night at her mom's, I was glad to be there. We remained there for a few days to get our bearings as well as some rest. First lesson for you new parents, if family or trustworthy friends want the help, let them. A good night of rest will prepare you for the day ahead of feedings and changing diapers.

Once we finally returned home, we returned to a sty. I had been going home periodically to feed the cat as well as the fish. (In my mind, I don't see the need for this. The two fish are a good size and the cat could access the bowl with little difficulty.) I found myself happy to be home and even happier that I got paternity leave for a week and a half. This opportunity gave me time to bond with the baby and start learning all about this new life form that was/is totally dependent upon Drea and me.

The first day back to work was nerve-wracking. I work forty minutes from home. I was worried that I would be needed in some way and be unable to be there for Drea and the baby. At work, I got the usual congratulations that go along with an event of this magnitude. Perhaps the best gift of all though was a client of mine moving out of the area and me getting to close his file. (This client had been a nightmare to work with over the past eight months.) Another highlight of work was being able to listen to music at a loud volume in my office. (My car is my office.) I cranked up some DISRUPT and some AGORAPHOBIC NOSEBLEED and did my job.

During our first two weeks, we had a lot of appointments. We had our first appointment to check on Evan's progress during our first week home. This appointment also included a circumcision. The nurse weighed Evan and we found he had dropped some weight. Don't worry, parents, it's perfectly normal. During the weighing process, Evan did what little babies do best, he peed. Not on himself, but on the nurse. After Evan finished peeing, I started talking to him about peeing on nurses. The nurse turned toward me and said, "He didn't pee on me!" Mind you, while she is saying this, she has pee running down the side of her face. I said, "It's right there on the side of your face." She said, "I've never been peed on by a baby." I let it go at this point. My feeling is that if you say a baby has never peed you on, and you work in pediatrics, odds are you are a damn liar.

Drea and I then went to the consultation regarding the circumcision. Our friendly family doctor walked us through the procedure and then asked us to leave. I asked if I had to and the doctor said they only allow parents to stay if one or both strongly request. "I strongly request," I said. So I sat there with my son while the doctor proceeded to numb the genitals and then make a cut here and a cut there and we were done. Evan was unhappy about this procedure and became even more disagreeable after we had to have his Bilirubin test. Bilirubin is the end product of oxygen-carrying red blood cells. It is a yellowish tint, and thus if your baby is Jaundiced, the medical term for an excess of Bilirubin, the baby may have to have more blood tests done or be put under a Bili-light. Simple terms: an excess of Bilirubin means that the baby's body is producing more Bilirubin than its liver can handle. The Bilirubin test involves pricking the heel and drawing about an ounce of blood from the baby. Babies usually don't like this. Evan had to have his Bilirubin done four times. By the end of these appointments, I was fried. There is nothing worse than hearing your newborn screaming and knowing that you can't do anything about it because what is hurting the newborn will actually help the newborn medically.

Drea and I have been experimenting to see what music Evan likes the best. So far, Drea's Reggae, in particularly Vivian Jackson and Bob Marley, have been favorites. Evan also likes TCHKUNG. Evan has also found a liking in the first DISCHARGE album. It makes him smile.

Another lesson for you parents—If someone tells you that a baby's smile is just gas, smack them the fuck up. From day one, Evan has smiled. Like when the nurse handed him to Drea to be fed, he smiled. When Drea and I talk to him, he smiles.

My final thought/observation for this first month is how much Evan projects excrement and other things from his body. The peeing has always been a given, but yesterday as I was burping Evan, he managed to projectile spit-up onto the couch arm. Then today as I was changing his diaper, which had little poop, Evan projectile pooped. If you have never seen this before, you are missing out. I heard a fart and then saw something coming out at a high rate of speed. Some instinct, perhaps from my days of little

league baseball, caused me to reach out to stop what was issuing forth. (Actually, I had on my Aus-Rotten t-shirt and didn't want to have to change before work.) But I caught a handful of poop. The poop that got by me, (I was horrible at little league) landed about three feet from the changing table. This is a guestimate. I didn't have time to get the measuring tape as I had poop in one hand and a diaper in the other.

Well, that's one month down. I feel pretty good about this whole daddy thing. I find myself wondering sometimes if I am a good father thus far. The answer tends to point to yes, but my thoughts still roam. Other parents I have talked to told me this is normal for the first child, but then you get used to it with each child you bring into the world.

Here's some recommended reading for punk parents, especially you dads. And do get involved and be a positive influence in your child/ren's life.

Naomi Wolf. *Misconceptions*. This one presents a more realistic view of pregnancy than a lot of other books.

Armin A. Brott and Jennifer Ash. *The Expectant Father*. I haven't found a book aimed toward guys that I really like, but this one comes the closest.

Vrinda Dalmiya and Linda Alcoff. "Are 'Old Wives" Tales Justified?" This one is an essay dealing with Epistemology, but has some good information about childrearing being taken away from women and put into the hands of men.

Maximumrocknroll issue #205, the punks with kids special. This one's still available as a back issue. Check it out— lots of information and different viewpoints.

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One of the most striking aspects of life in Third World countries is information starvation. Because they've learned not to trust their state-controlled media, people in authoritarian backwaters carefully debrief newcomers. What's going on abroad? What's going on here? Did you get any foreign newspapers or magazines through customs?

News is a component of infrastructure every bit as important as roads and telephones. Businesspeople need to know if a border with a neighboring country is open so they can decide whether or not to send out a truck. Citizens need to know their government's international standing—are those falling bombs their leader's fault? Hunger for news holds a country back almost as much as hunger for food.

The First Amendment enshrines freedom of the press in the US Constitution, but a variety of forces conspire to prevent totally free access to information. Residents of most cities rely on one large daily newspaper, usually part of a media conglomerate that itself owns the biggest local radio and television stations. Directors of that corporation and the editors who work for them are frequently loathe to offend influential government officials and business tycoons, for if they get cut off—excluded from access to press releases, interviews, leaks, etc.—their ability to collect news is impeded. One might argue that such "news" is little more than bullshit propaganda, but fear of causing offense often inhibits the media's natural role as a watchdog of democracy.

Our government very rarely censors the media. It doesn't have to.

Another a new, subtle form of self-censorship has recently become commonplace. A news story is covered in full, minus a crucial fact that changes the entire tenor of the piece. That missing bit of information is invariably something that would make someone important look bad.

The American media has, for example, devoted extensive coverage to political unrest in Venezuela, where mobs loyal to President Hugo Chávez have clashed with striking employees of the nation's state oil company. The crisis sparked an attempted coup d'état in April 2002. To busy Americans, this looks like a simple story of a Latin American dictator crushing struggling workers. That's because three key facts are regularly omitted from the story. First, the oil company strike was called by its wealthy managers, not its workers. Second, Chávez was democratically elected. Third, the coup plotters were backed by the Bush Administration. "We were sending informal, subtle signals that we don't like this guy," said a US Defense Department official quoted in *The Guardian*, an English paper that has become an important post-9/11 resource for Americans in search of objective reporting. The bully, it turns out, is us—not Chávez.

Similarly, the North Korean crisis looks like a simple case of crafty commies welching on their agreement not to develop nukes in exchange for economic aid. Repeatedly left out of the thousands of words spilled daily on this topic are the contents of the 1994 North Korea-US Agreed Framework, in which President Clinton promised to develop full diplomatic relations with Kim Jung Il's regime, and North Korean warnings dating to 1999 that they would resume nuclear research unless the US kept up its end of the bargain.

North Korea is violating the agreement. But the US broke it years earlier.

The closest thing to a "smoking gun" found by UN arms inspectors in Iraq is 12 warheads found at an ammo dump south of Baghdad. Americans know that the White House considers this discovery a "material breach" that justifies war. Few are aware that, as reported Jan. 17 in the UK *Telegraph*, the canisters were empty, and are probably American-made shells sold to Iraq by the Reagan administration. Not much of a "smoking gun."

Scratch the surface and you find this sort of thing all over the "news." Democratic complaints that the Bush tax cuts only benefit the "richest one percent" of Americans are duly reported, but leave out a definition of the term. Did you know that you have to earn more than $330,000 a year to be in the top one percent? Nineteen percent of Americans don't. They told *Time* that *they're* in that top one percent.

Perhaps you've read that American soldiers are fighting off guerrillas loyal to warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar in eastern Afghanistan. Hekmatyar, the Associated Press says, is "believed by Afghan and US authorities to be allied with Taliban and Al Qaeda remnants." That may be true. But Hekmatyar was always a sworn enemy of the Taliban—until the CIA tried to kill him last May, with a Hellfire missile fired by a Predator drone plane.

Changes the story a little, doesn't it?

P.S. NEW BOOK: *GAS WAR: THE TRUTH BEHIND THE AMERICAN OCCUPATION OF AFGHANISTAN* is now out. It's my comprehensive, painstakingly researched look at the real reason Bush ordered the invasion of Afghanistan: to run a gas pipeline from the world's biggest oil reserves (in Kazakhstan) to the sea for transportation by tankers. *GAS WAR* relies on mainstream sources to piece together the biggest scandal of the century so far—how the world's richest nation bombed its poorest for the sake of corporate gain. *GAS WAR* is available through my website www.RALL.com or Amazon but not through bookstores because none of my regular publishers dared touch this controversial topic. Alternatively, you can mail $15 (includes Priority Mail shipping within the US) to: Ted Rall, PO Box 2092, Times Square Station, New York NY 10108.

I've officially entered the 90s and I'm totally fucking disgusted with myself! On top being a new (used) computer owner, I just found out that I'm losing my apartment at the end of February. If bad shit comes in threes, I don't wanna know what's next! Seriously, I can't think of anything more disgustingly "mid-twenties" than a laptop-owning couch-surfer. My life is becoming a Winona Ryder/Ethan Hawke movie (minus all the nice {stolen} clothes and happy ending). It's gotta be the computer's fault! I was doing (almost) great before I decided to get a fucking computer…now my life is turning to shit! It doesn't take a psychiatrist to figure out that my techno-fear (or hatred) and my intense love for vinyl might be related somehow. Hopefully, you get where I'm coming from…or can at least laugh at it. Enough blab…here's a run-down of notable punk/garage new releases and re-issues! Pencils ready? GO!

2003 has officially started: the mighty DIRTBOMBS have belted out two new singles! To coincide with their recent Australian tour, Detroit's finest decided to share the wealth with a couple of Aussie labels. Zerox Records (out of New Fucking Zealand!) was given the pleasure of playing a role in the Dirtbombs' discography with the release of a new 45, featuring cover versions of "By My Side" (the Elois) and "I Started A Joke" (the Bee Gees). I'm more than willing to go along with the theory that the Dirtbombs are playing an active role in the effort to rid the world of Bee Gees members, as one of the Gibb boys croaked immediately after the release of this single. Of course, both tunes are stellar and you should hunt it down ASAP! I'm sure this single will available from the usual sources, which is more than I can say for their second Aussie offering, the *Pray For Pills* 7." Released on the great Corduroy Records, this is one to make all the scum drool: two exclusive tunes on a "live-to-acetate" homemade pressing of 100 copies! Apparently, Corduroy has done these hand-cut singles for BOB LOG III and DEAD MOON as well. Those of us outside Australia have virtually no chance of scoring a copy of this version (other than eBay, which is something I personally refuse to put up with), but a regular pressing will be released soon (so I hear). As an obsessive fan of all things Mick Collins, I'm anxiously awaiting this one.

You folks remember Kryptonite Records? This Wisconsin label is responsible for bringing us great shit by THE LAST SONS OF KRYPTON, the EVOLUTIONS, and those questionable VOM and DONNAS releases. Anyway, after a painfully long period of inactivity, Kryptonite is back with three new singles! Leading off this barrage is new single by the SCAT RAG BOOSTERS, an awesome blues-punk outfit from Canada. I've always been impressed by this band, so I'm anxious to hear this new one. The next two singles proudly offer up two of Wisconsin's finest: the KILL-A-WATTS and the CATHOLIC BOYS! You might remember the fantastic split 7" EP these folks shared last year. Since that release, the Kill-A-Watts have taken snotty singles devotees by storm, releasing a slew of killer records on discriminating labels like Rip Off, Hate, Flying Bomb, and Yakisakana! If you've got a brain, you've got 'em all. This new one, *Then And Now*, is a 7" EP that features two tunes from 1997 and two tunes from 2002, all of which are exclusive. If any of you SF folks saw them at Kimo's last year, you know this is a band that actually lives up to its name! Shockingly good! While da' Watts have been busy, the Catholic Boys have been hiding out since the split. That hasn't stopped this gang of Midwestern punks from hyping upcoming releases all over the place. A Catholic boy banned from the Rip Off Records message board??? *They've gotta be good!!!* I'm banking on this single, as well as upcoming releases on the Bancroft and Trickknee labels, to be killer. Really now…how could ex-members of TEENAGE REJECTS blow it?

Radio Blast Records has been busy as of late. They've recently released 12" by SHAKIN NASTIES, which is worthy of investigation. Also, they've done a service by issuing the debut album by the DISTRACTION, *Calling All Radios*, on vinyl. As you probably already know, this album has been available as a CD-only release on the ever-popular Dirtnap label, but it's finally made its way onto the *real* format. I can't say I'm completely sold on this band, but they were decent live and *the kids* seem to dig them. Finally, I'm sure the most eye-catching new Radio Blast release is a split 7" featuring the Distraction and a band I'm not sure I can talk about here. You've probably already got the record anyway…

Here's one for the more adventurous buyers: *NFJM019* is a 7" EP compilation that features some the finest "out-there" bands around right now. As far as my tastes are concerned, PANTY RAID and ERASE ERRATA are my favorites here, but there are some more familiar names. Depending on what camp you're connected to, you'll either be elated or bored stiff. It's released on some label called NFJM and comes in a hand-screened sleeve.

Signing up to write a "garage" column for *MRR* during this whole craze might prove to be one of the lamest things I've ever done…which would be saying quite a bit. Here's a record that could be loosely described as "garagey", but doesn't reek of John Peel creaming his jeans: *Rustle Up Some Action With THE OKMONIKS!!!* I enjoyed this Arizona band's first single, but I'm all over this one! This is straight up booty-shakin' Farfisa-fueled 60s punk stomp! Like their last single, this one features excellent female vocals, a great beat, and perfect production. Self-released in a hand-numbered edition of 99!

Looks like On/On Switch is ready to add another great to its roster: the LOST SOUNDS! As you might be aware, the Lost Sounds' output is not restricted to their Empty and Big Neck albums. Hate Records released an LP entitled *Demos And Outtakes, Vol. 1* last year. Naturally, if there's a Volume One, there simply must be a Volume Two! On/On's *Demos, Vol.2* CD is basically a wide-release version of *Recent Transmissions*, a tour-only CDR made by the Lost Sounds in an edition of 15 fucking copies! You get alternate versions of tunes you know and love, plus some mighty fine exclusive material. Like all other Lost Sounds stuff, it's required listening.

I think it's time for this column to take a mind-numbingly stupid turn: the ROCK'N'ROLL ADVENTURE KIDS have *finally* released another record!!! The *Live On Berzerkly Radio* 12" EP, released on S.P.A.M. Records, is not only one of the most incredibly moronic records around, it's been one of my faves for months. Guess that makes me a moron too! Anyway, lots of Bay Area folks were lucky enough to score a "preview" copy of this 12."..without *the fucking album cover!* Rather than wait for the covers to get printed, the Adventure Kids decided to draw all over the white paper sleeves and sell "personalized" copies at their shows! To me, there is no better example of this band's gusto and uncontrollable hyperactivity than these hand-drawn copies. What incredible dorks! Oh well, the magic is now gone: it looks like the real covers are finally done (looking good!) and the 12" is ready for a proper release! *Fried Chicken!!! Whoo-hoo!!!*

The biggest mistake I made in my last column was neglecting to mention that SWEET J.A.P. finally made an album! I was seriously looking forward to *Virgin Vibe*, and all expectations were exceeded. This album is fucking nuts! With all these Japanese bands going power-pop or neo-new wave, it's refreshing to here a band that plays in the spirit and sound of the best REGISTRATORS material. It's also nice that they live in Minneapolis, if only because I might actually get to see them play! For now, *Virgin Vibe* is available as a CD-only release on 1+2 Records, but Big Neck Records should have the vinyl out in the next few months. If you can't wait, visit http://www.nice-neat.com and snatch one up! By the way, this website could probably hook you up with those Japan-only FIRESTARTER and RADIO SHANGHAI records you've been after for months!

Pelado Records seemed to keep pretty quiet in 2002, but they're back with some new singles. Their releases tend to focus a little too much on Johnny Thunders clone bands for my tastes, but they certainly aren't incapable of dropping a decent record or two. Thus far, 2003 has seen Pelado release singles by the Distraction, the ENDS and the EXPLODING HEARTS, all of which are decent. The Ends come off as overly poppy version of '77 punk, which is cool if you're riding the fence. The Exploding Hearts don't try to fool you though: they're just 100% power pop, and pretty damn good at it to boot! Their *Guitar Romantic* LP featured a few tunes that have imbedded themselves in my head, one of which ("Modern Kicks") is featured on their Pelado single. Rumored to be limited to 100 copies, so happy hunting!

I simply can't finish up the "new shit" section this without mentioning a few hardcore records that have been getting heavy play at my place. I'm choosing these not only because they fucking rock, but because I think any fan of the above-mentioned stuff could easily get into them. These won't be anything newsworthy to fans of the genre, but I'm guessing that a lot of the rocknroll record dorks are passing on 'em. First off, the FUTURES' *Electric Wave From The Underworld* LP on 625 Thrash is a fucking monster! If you ask me, this is just *really fast* and insane garage punk! Totally crazed, incredibly rockin' and oh so fun. Finally…all TRAGEDY records fucking rule! C'mon, this is *MRR*…I've gotta mention Tragedy! If you need a change of pace, try these on for size…they certainly did the trick for me.

On with the "Old Shit" section! I'm pretty sure the latest news on collectable punk singles boots/represses is of immediate concern, so I'll start there. Last Year's Youth has recently unearthed a fair amount of stuff, namely singles by the GROUT (*Do It Yourself* 7"EP) and the NOW (two versions of the *Into The 80s* single and the *Development Corporations* single), all of which are decent, but far from mandatory. I've seen a rather pricey SEX PISTOLS "live on the radio" 7" EP boot floating around, but I'm not biting. I guess the ones that'll grab the most attention this month are the two bootalike GG ALLIN singles, *You Hate Me & I Hate You* and *Gimme Some Head*, both of which are on colored

vinyl.

Sure, the singles news is kinda blah, but I've stumbled across quite a few great LP reissues lately. My favorite right now has to be the PROTEX *Listening In...* LP, released on Good Vibrations Records out of Belfast! I'm told this came out around a year ago, but these things have a way of trickling over slowly. More than likely, I missed out when this initially arrived. Regardless, I've got it now...and it's damn good! Irish second-wave punk/power-pop from '79 that sounds good enough to be first wave!

A couple years ago, Gulcher Records resurfaced with their stellar GIZMOS re-issues. Since then, they've re-released material by MX-80 SOUND, AFRIKA KORPS, PANICS, DANCING CIGGARETTES and THE WALKING RUINS...not to mention the brilliant *Red Snerts* compilation. All of these are totally worth a look (Gizmos, Panics and Afrika Korps in particular) and feature fantastic, informative and seriously obsessive-compulsive liner notes. They've also just re-released '74-'79 material by Boston's THUNDERSTRAIN, so keep an out for that one.

Add THE ALAN MILMAN SECT to the list of great Munster Records re-issues. Seriously, this is how shit should be done every time: 220-gram vinyl, awesome art, good liners and (most importantly) *killer* tunes!

Detour Records is back at it with the NAME *What's In A Name* LP. While not as fantastic as the other Detour excavations I've run across, there is a fair amount of good UK mod/pop here. I think the main problem is that there just isn't enough studio material to draw from to make this truly worthwhile. Still...it's on Detour...that was all I needed to know...

I for one am kinda glad to see all those *Bloodstains Across...* and *Killed By Death* comps take a backseat (at least for now). Shit was just getting too out of hand and the comps were getting way too shitty. However, one thing that I thought was long overdue was to give some of those collectable and great early hardcore records the same treatment, which the *Killed By Hardcore* series finally did in 2002. The latest volume in that series definitely keeps things interesting: *Killed By Finnish Hardcore*! I'll leave it to someone more qualified to dissect this one...don't wanna step on anyone's toes this early in the game.

If all goes according to plan, next month I should be able to recap my trip to the LA Shakedown! Even though there are only a handful of interesting acts (and a bunch of dinosaurs), it should prove to be a good time. We shall see. That does it for this month. I think it goes without saying that I need to find a new *real* address before I can get a PO Box, so I'll have one next time (really...honest). Keep sending stuff to my attention at the regular *MRR* address (unless Mike and Arwen tell me to fuck off and take care of my own shit, which is a distinct possibility). See you next month...letsgethurt@yahoo.com!!

OK, I've been hearing a lot of about this war thing that everyone is protesting and I'm totally with you all. This shit that Reagan is doing in El Salvador is totally fucked up. Now on to music.

For a long time I've threatened to write about Crossover, this might take a few months and hopefully will spark some controversy so here goes.

"When the punks learn how to play their instruments, they will play metal." —Lemmy

These days metal influence in hardcore is so great that we barely even recognize it anymore. Quite a few bands that are today considered "hardcore" would for certain have been considered metal just a few years ago. Slick production, double bass, guitar solos, crunching and chugga chugga riffs don't really phase most people any more. But there was a time when this was a radical departure from the norms of the style. The history of punk's interaction with metal is long and contentious. At times it is difficult to separate the two styles and at others they seem totally at odds. Throughout the history of punk/metal interaction there have been purists in one camp or the other who resisted the mixing of the styles, those who readily embraced it and switched styles and the largest group by far who simply went along with it either way. It would betray one's stand on the issue to say that the interaction of punk and metal has been good or bad overall for one style or the other. But it would be difficult to say the each style has not been affected greatly from exposure to the other.

It's hard to say what was the first "crossover" band. I personally think Void and Discharge were the first two hardcore bands to attempt to add metal to their hardcore sound. Broken Bones, English Dogs, DRI, Corrosion of Conformity, Accused, Suicidal Tendencies, and many others followed shortly after. In the early days of punk we hear very little about metal. In zines and other source material from '82 and earlier we mostly hear punks talk about glam, 70s rock, and new wave bands. One hears occasional references to Black Sabbath. But metal bands of the day such as Judas Priest are rarely mentioned. However, when bands like Metallica and Slayer started playing speed metal, everything changed over night. Many have argued that Metallica and Slayer "ripped off" hardcore to develop the speed metal style. Let us remember that in the days before *Kill 'Em All* the hardest metal was stuff like Raven, Iron Maiden, Judas Priest, and Saxon. Metallica ratcheted up the tempo of metal to a hardcore cadence. Clearly they were influenced by Discharge, GBH, Minor Threat, etc. They simply added the musicianship, production standards, and theatrics of metal to the raw speed and fury of punk. Things started changing rapidly in 1983 and '84. All over the world, speed metal was growing in an underground scene similar to the hardcore scene. The speed metal style that was lifted from punk was then reassimilated by hundreds of hardcore bands. Bands that had previously played fast hardcore, thrash and punk added chugging riffs, double bass, and guitar leads to their songs. This process is what we will heretofore refer to as crossover.

I'm not sure who coined the term crossover, but most are familiar with it from the DRI LP of the same name. Actually, DRI had started taking on quite a bit of metal influence on their previous LP, *Dealing With It*, but this became full-blown by the *Crossover* LP. DRI had their roots in the Texas punk scene that had spawned the Big Boys, Dicks, MDC, and Butthole Surfers. Following their move to San Francisco, the metal really came to the fore in their music. The DRI 22-song EP/LP is one of the most critical early 80s American hardcore records. *Dealing With It* is still pretty boss, but by *Crossover*, DRI started a long decline into mediocre metal songwriting and performance. Another early US hardcore band that were thrash standard bearers was Corrosion of Conformity. Their first LP is non-stop hardcore rage. They opened for Slayer at a show at Baltimore" Loft in 1984 and Kerry King was so impressed that he told COC he was going to call his label and get them signed the next day. He made that call and Metal Blade formed a subsidiary called Death Records, which was to release DRI, COC, Dr. Know, and the *Complete Death* compilation LPs.

Which brings us to one of my major points. The story of crossover is not just one of musical style. It is also a story of different ethical approaches to music. Hardcore from the outset was known for being anti-commercial, independent, and totally DIY. I must note that at its core, it still is. Metal, however, was totally commercial and pretty well wrapped up in the mainstream music industry and standard industry practices. Metal was all about music business as usual. This might seem like a no-brainer in 2003, but for hardcore punks in 1983, this was a stab in the back. Punk had arisen just a few years earlier as rebellion against the music business and mainstream culture. For hardcore to be commodified and sell out so quickly (3-5 years) was a shock to most purists. Indeed, there are still many purists today reigniting the same battle that broke out when DRI and COC signed to Metal Blade. There are many who believe that Crossover "killed" the first wave of 80s hardcore. Crossover weakened the original hardcore style. It tended to stifle eclectic and adventurous bands by having a fairly homogenized style. When major labels formed "hardcore" subsidiaries, they chose a narrow spectrum of the then-small hardcore scene and mass marketed it to mall shoppers across America. This led to a shallow, commercialized, and very corny version of hardcore moving into the mainstream. I'm thinking particularly of Cro Mags, Exploited, Agnostic Front and GBH circa 1985-86. This commercialized version of crossover hardcore also attracted a huge wave of violent meatheads into the hardcore scene, which pretty much killed most underground booking until the early/mid 90s.

One of the major criticisms leveled against bands who adopted a more metal style in the mid 80s was that they were attempting to become more commercial and "sell out." We should note that of the hardcore bands that strayed from hardcore (virtually every US hardcore band except Poison Idea moved towards metal, rock or pop in the mid 80s) those that went towards metal found their success quite fleeting. While J Mascis, Jay Robbins, Bob Mould, and Ian MacKaye are all respected in the pop an indie rock worlds, Moby and the Beastie Boys have been quite successful in hip hop and techno, only Danzig has managed to cashier his hardcore notoriety into lasting success in the world of metal, and that in a sort of gothic subgenre. Indeed, most of the attempts of hardcore bands to move beyond "crossover" into the world of mainstream metal now seem laughably cliché and dated. Bands such as Agnostic Front, GBH, and Exploited are back to playing their old punk material in a desperate attempt to stay profitable. And others such as Suicidal Tendencies have been reduced to pitiable shadows of their fleeting metal greatness. But this should not actually be surprising. As we look at the story of crossover, a pattern will emerge. Of all the hardcore bands that introduced metal to their sound, most were already very good hardcore bands. They all had one really good crossover album in them, then began a slide into metal that almost always ended in utter mediocrity or even totally pathetic silliness. I think we can look at the period of 1984-87 as a sort of golden age of crossover where bands got the right mix of metal and hardcore nailed. The later bands that arose to play crossover (Excel, Cryptic Slaughter) emerged just to play crossover, rather than moving from one style to another But those bands that did start hardcore and go to metal, ultimately failed at metal. But enough of that, let's get back to the music.

Discharge were the greatest band ever, and towards 1983 they began to introduce a great deal of metal into their songs. After Guitarist Bones quit to form Broken Bones, both bands added more and more metal influence until both went totally off the deep end into bad joke metal territory. Discharge's *Hear Nothing See Nothing Say Nothing* LP stands right on the brink between hardcore and crossover. Bones lays down some wicked guitar leads and the guitar production is super thick and heavy. However, this is essentially a hardcore record. You can hear the creeping influence of metal in the crunched riffing in "Protest and Survive" and of course the many screaming leads throughout the album. Soon after Pooch came in on guitar, Discharge released the *Warning* 12" which is even more metal, followed quickly by the *Never Again* LP, which compiled a number of singles and the *Warning* 12". After this point Discharge went deeper into metal territory with 12"s like *Ignorance* and *The More I See*. The vocals got less gruff and more falsetto, the solos longer. This process culminated in perhaps the most disappointing record of all time, *Grave New World*, which is good only for a laugh before it sets in how sad it really is. Discharge attempted to tour the US in 1986 playing this material and they were pelted with rocks and bottles and forced to break up and leave the country. Score one for American Hardcore Purists!

Bones took his guitar virtuosity to Broken Bones and released a string of increasingly metal but ripping 7"s and LPs starting with the *Crucified* and *Decapitated* 7"s, *Dem Bones* LP and a live LP recorded at the 100 Club. The crossover triumph from Broken Bones is for sure the *Bonecrusher* LP on the then-new Combat Core label. (a subsidiary of major metal label Combat/Relativity). This was followed up by some pretty good 12"s: *Never Say Die* and *Trader in Death*, and then two really horrible metal LPs, *Stitched Up* and *Losing Control*.

Some other UK punk standard-bearers also went into metal territory. GBH and Exploited jumped quickly on the bandwagon, and later off again as have seen above. However, English Dogs and the Varukers did much better at mixing traditional UK punk with metal. English Dogs' first two LPs, *Mad Punx and English Dogs* and *Invasion of the Porky Men* were more like GBH than anything else, but by 1984 they had produced some really sick crossover with the *To the Ends of the Earth* 12". This was followed by the LP *Forward into Battle* on Rot in the UK and Combat in the US. One important element of UK crossover style (not so much as in the US) was crimped hair! The leather jacket and denim vest were universal from Oakland to Stockholm. But in the UK it was all about the hair crimpers. Just look at the back of *Forward into Battle*. English Dogs went on to release the OK *Metalmorphosis* LP and then a pretty ridiculous fantasy concept LP *Where Legend Began* that I think you would have to be on acid to take seriously. This LP is done up like a Dungeons and Dragons module complete with a map of a fantasy realm on the inner sleeve where you can follow the adventures of whatever wizard or whatever they are singing out.

The Varukers, like English Dogs, started out playing GBH/Discharge style hard driving UK hardcore/punk. But by their last LP, *One Struggle One Fight*, they had taken on a great deal of crossover power. I think this is one of the most overlooked crossover LPs and one of the best mixes of metal and hardcore ever. Varukers are much better known for their earlier punk stuff, and I love that stuff too. But *One Struggle One Fight* has some really crunchy, sick, and heavy riffs that remind me a lot of more current metal-influenced crust bands like Skitsystem, Wind of Pain, etc. It is important to note that the guitar player, bassist, and drummer of the Varukers went on to form Sacrilege whose LP *Behind the Realms of Madness* is probably *the* best hardcore influenced metal record (followed by *Onslaught Power From Hell*).

Note that I'm not dealing with bands like Antisect, Anti System, or Amebix in this column, because I would consider those bands to be more a part of the crust or proto-crust scene as oppsed to crossover or metalcore. I wrote about the early days of UK crust in the last issue of *Profane Existence* in an article called "Rise of Crust."

Other than DRI and COC, I think the most important American crossover bands were Accused, Suicidal Tendencies ,and Dr. Know. Note also that crossover was a global phenomenon, and bands like Rattus and Raw Power who had been thrash mainstays also picked up the crossover ball and ran with it. But this is a story we will continue in next month's issue. That is, if there is a next month and Reagan doesn't push the button and blow us all away tomorrow.

And I've got to wonder what the fuck it's gonna take can it be undone can we stem the tide of violence or are we gonna sit back and relax and watch tv while the fucking have nots get their heads kicked in over and over and over again.
—Born Against, "Nine Years Later"

Days and nights spent wandering the streets of San Francisco start to blur together when your life is a contradiction. You are unemployed pretending you are an artist, but really you drink like a writer without the discipline. Hemingway had a very stiff backed wooden chair so he'd stay awake long enough to write. I have a little metal chair, like you sit in in the waiting room at the clinic. I don't have a problem with exhaustion, just giddiness: I pace my room and then the whole flat and then the whole neighborhood, looking for coffee and understanding, and sometimes not getting either. Usually the coffee comes through, thick and familiar. People drift in and out of our lives like storylines, I follow their minidramas in order to escape my own. I stutter in their beds, half-dressed, looking for more from them then I deserve, forgetting the terms of our agreements. *This is not the place or time for this.* I have made the choices, and I have structured this life to live it alone. Not so much alone, I am a member of a larger community, but I exist as an individual, not as part of a couple. So eating and just the general act of living is a solitary exercise; even love and sex are like that: somehow an act performed by an individual. Some people fear being alone, and others fear being owned. I fear both, but I choose my lonely autonomy, or maybe I just create circumstances that force me to accept fate as choice.

My room in full of clues, evidence of what has happened the past week. Keys. Matches. Sudafed. A roman candle. A copy of Prince's movie, *Under the Cherry Moon*. And in front of me is an inaccurate imperialist map that says the Soviet Union still exists. I found it in my room, like a clue. Its inherent inaccuracy doesn't matter; I don't believe the maps anyway.

Today on the street, I got stampeded. I had just checked my mail and was feeling kinda rad cause I'd just gotten action. It was warm out, too warm for February, so I was wearing a skirt and pink fishnets, and there were more people on the street than usual. I turned up 23rd Street, on my way to a diner to drink

iced tea and write this column about seeing the Circle Jerks at a fancy club after seeing a bunch of punks play bluegrass at an all-ages DIY space. I was gonna bludgeon to death that eternal question: *What is punk, anyway? Is it about a sound or a community?* My PO Box was empty, so as I walked down Mission, I was thinking about mail, how I've finally begun to write to old friends trying to not lose them. I was going to maybe screw the idea of writing about punk, and write about how much I like the postal service, 'cause I am not that columnist and I don't really want to write about the Circle Jerks or any of those questions about music and purity in 2003 anyway. I don't care whether you understand that what we have here is each other and whatever idealism, hope, and passion we can wring out of our weary hearts. I was going to write about mail, or maybe about how my housemate, Cookie, and I have started giving each other homework assignments so she'll write and I'll play music. I was in my head and my body was following, and some guy whistled at me and I kept walking, undisturbed. But then all these men catcalled so ferociously I was actually thrown for once; both sides of the street were full of nothing but men whooping at me, like in a movie or one of my teenage nightmares in Phoenix, and this time I didn't say anything. And one point I heard my angry husky voice force itself to enunciate please fucking shut up to one of the men, but the effort had no soul. A woman followed behind me, yelling how much, baby, how much? And then all these men followed along with how much? Until a friend of mine caught up with me and walked me to the record store.

What changed? I used to fight with heart. Everything I've had to consider with this war, with the present state of civil liberties in this country, has forced me think about *tactics*. Kinda odd for someone who considers passion to be the highest form of art, who celebrates, by nature, things like fighting in the streets, screaming when you hurt, exposing yourself. But I also have to consider what is sustainable and effective. I used to fucking rage with all of my pain from all of the injustices around me whenever I was attacked: *You try to humiliate me, I'll fucking expose you, I will fucking scream my head off like a crazy bitch if you try to fuck with me.* It let out some of my overwhelming rage, and it fed it too; the emotions built up so intensely and they were released with the same vibrancy. I was using these tactics always, whether I was directly physically threatened or not. I just couldn't keep it up, it made an already emotionally taxing experience overwhelm me too much. You need to call people on their shit, but I know that one of the most important political acts we can commit in our lifetimes is to not be abusive to people. I still can't reconcile those issues, and what they point to in terms of larger theoretical questions about the rights of the individual versus the rights of the community. I understand that we have to resist for the process of resisting, for the simple act of demonstrating our dignity and humanity by standing up for what we believe in as an act without the expectation that our efforts are always going to amount to something. But I am unable to deny the fact that I really want results. I want suffering to matter, I want every relationship to make me a better person. I want to ask the men on the street to treat me with respect and I want them to understand how it fucks them over to view me the way they have been taught to, to exercise the power that has been denied them over someone they view as more vulnerable than they are. But I can't even get all the respect I need in my personal life, and it is so intense to make yourself a target all the time, to be turned into a spectacle and to react to it by drawing more attention to yourself. I used to believe that it was our absolute responsibility to confront people about their shit always, but that is not only painful, it forced me into a weird role with the people around me, and I hate to be condescended to, and I so I try to avoid being put in a position that seems to be—but honestly is not—inherently condescending. It just takes a lot of thought, and a lot of attention,

I haven't resolved my concern about finding effective tactics of resistance for mobilizing against a war that will probably have begun by the time this goes to print. I hope you guys have some ideas, because my heart has been nearly broken since George W. Bush was announced president that fateful night not long ago. But there's no time for desperation so lets read books about revolution and learn from people who've struggled before us. Please send *Maximum* a reading list and any ideas on creative tactics of resistance, and send me zines you wrote, personal mail or weird stuff off yr. floor. My address is at the bottom.

And a Few More Things:

The right to an affordable, safe, and legal abortion is becoming a matter of serious concern for women in the United States again. I think it is essential for women (queer women too—rape is always a threat) to begin to discuss what we will do if Roe v. Wade is overturned. I still haven't read the history of the Jane collective yet, but I will soon and I bet you can find it in the library.

My friends in Allergic to Bullshit just got back from tour, and if you got to see them, lucky you. I have a tape of what will be their record and fuck, it's amazing. Keep an eye out for it.

If you have a bad ankle or wrist or anything like that that always goes out, take internal arnica immediately and that will help. You can get it at a health food store in those little blue and white homeopathic pill containers that look like a chapstick tube. I have chronic problems with my right ankle and so I know arnica is cool.

Current Reading List:

Bring the War Home! Vol.1 Forgotten Heroes, The Black Liberation Army and the Weather Underground Anarchist Action Collective, PO Box 11331, Eugene, OR 97440 (probably a couple bucks)

Essays from the Minister of Defense by Huey P. Newton

Grapefruit: A Book of Instructions and Drawings by Yoko Ono

Contest! Prizes!

Send me a picture, or a couple of pictures, to use for covers of my zines. The person who sends me the most interesting or just rad picture gets a roll of film (their preference), a picture of my roommate (who's a girl drummer), and some other stuff I cram into the box! Deadline is May 2, 2003, so send photo(s), film preference (speed, format, and whether you prefer b/w or color) right away to: Kat Case, PO Box 401160, San Francisco, CA 94140. This is not some dumb April Fool's joke, I swear.

The liquor store down on Westminster, the one with the sign claiming patronage by "the smart buyer," has been closed since the fall. Even when it was open it was scarcely better stocked than a friend's liquor cabinet, just three coolers full of shitty beer and half a shelf of ancient scotch bottles. The hard shit was on the wall in the bullet-proof booth in which the cashier stood.

Across the street there's a bakery, a podiatrist's office, and a party store. Behind that building is the Woonasquetucket River, so polluted you can hear it clanking.

The Olneyville public library, a tiny two-room affair consisting mostly of computers and children's books, is an old bank building. The old library is now an art and community space which faces one of the reportedly twelve most dangerous intersections in the US The current bank is across the street, next to the sandwich shop.

The neighborhood supermarket is a Price Rite. Imagine a post occupation Poland, or the version of the USSR that we were taught in school during the cold war. It's set up so the outer aisles run one way, so for instance you have to go down the produce aisle and up the cake mix aisle, you can't skip around the back of the aisle. It's messy one-way traffic. Then, there is no express checkout, just a bleak ocean of slow moving regular lanes. And the waits are phenomenal. On the positive side, the Price Rite doesn't pipe in muzac through the intercom; it's not uncommon to hear Jimi Hendrix and Van Halen during an average visit (dear reader: if you do not like Jimi Hendrix and Van Halen you are either a self-conscious liar or a dipshit).

The plasma center on Westminster always runs a healthy trade, as does the carwash across the street. No matter when I walk past, there is always a cop car exiting the "premium service" stall—the one with the hand polish and vacuum. The one that's *not* self service. Every time, I daydream for a minute about all the Latino guys working there slowly servicing the police cars, loosening lugs, slipping lighters up the tail pipe, removing wiper blades. It's at that carwash that I use the powersprayer to wash the emulsion off my silk screens.

Back up Plainfield a couple of blocks, past the underpass and the Boys Club and the two Rent-A-Centers, is a little park

area, a minuscule green at the fork in the road. There's an oxidized brass eagle on a stone podium surrounded by overgrowth and trash. On the stand is a plaque declaring that shitty little monument, so neglected as to be unnoticeable, *In Memory Of Those Who Died in Service to Our Nation.* Fair enough, I suppose. What have our nation's dead to care about monuments in the world of the living? Still, this is the kind of neighborhood from where our military draws the majority of its fighting troops; bars on windows types of places. The kids walking out of the smoke shop stand face-to-face with a very real option in the duly noted dearth of opportunity that their parents and grandparents ate shit to get to. *In Memory of Those Who Died in Service of Our Nation.*

Every day around 4:30 the commuter rail roars through Olneyville on way to Boston. When the space next to mine was open last summer you could see it from our the windows, but people live there now. I imagine from the windows of the train, the people returning from their jobs see a lot of wreckage, a lot of spraypaint, a lot of trash. Just like from the highway that runs on an overpass outside of our space, I'm sure our building looks like an abandoned prison. But maybe they don't even think twice about it; they're just on their way somewhere else, after all. Besides, the real roadside monster spectacle is the bombed out brewery a couple of exits back.

Right about where you would be on the highway where you would best see the NO WAR banner hanging from our fire escape, there is a spooky clearing in the woods underneath. A sign down there says that the whole strip is for sale, but given its proximity to the overpass and there being old train tracks running through it, oh, and baaad stuff in the groundwater, I don't think it's going anywhere. Anyway, the clearing seems like a good hiding spot, or that's what I thought before I went down there this afternoon and found all those fucked up dolls...the old kind that look dirty even when brand new. It was a total horror movie moment.

On the other side of Oak Street from the haunted clearing is the school bus parking lot, on the same lot as the self-storage containers. There are two dozen or so steel trash cans, about the size of semi trailers. But instead of trash, they contain people's belongings. I guess they're trash-to-be cans.

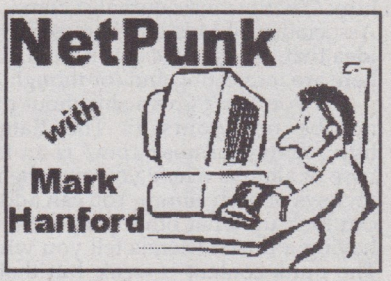
Providence, Rhode Island. It seems like a wink and a nudge that the city flag bears an anchor and the word "hope," seeing that Rhode Island is totally *not an island at all.* It's not even really a peninsula—it's like a shoehorn up Massachusetts' ass (which would explain why people there talk the way they do). The average income in our neighborhood is 80% of the median income in the state, which makes it a pretty poor neighborhood since Providence is a pretty poor city in a pretty poorly funded state. But there are plans. Blueprints and payoffs and Independent Studies. The same kind of shit that's probably going on in your town. There's a need to obsess over the streets as they are, to notice it all and get it all down while it still bears a resemblance to the mill neighborhood it has been since it was Irish, then all the subsequent shades of poor, but at the same time, *the shit.*

Up through the middle of the century *(the American Century, which is officially over per Henry Luce, so get ready to give it up!)* Olneyville was a bustling center of activity. But as with all industrial economies in this country, the steam ran out and predatory businesses came in. The city was too busy trying to revitalize the failed lukewarmth of downtown to notice what was going on two miles west...or more fairly, I'm sure they did notice, it was just too..ahem..*dark out*...to really see that far.

But hey, 2003 is a different ballgame. It's all good. Things are really movin', you know? There's this new development going up over on Valley Street. It's gonna' be called Rising Sum Mills...oh, Rising *Sun* mills, and it's gonna be just fantastic. Armory Revival Properties is a real stand up business. They have the foresight to realize that by raising the rent per square foot way above not only what it is currently, but above affordable housing standards (as legally defined).

Well-endowed individuals will move to the neighborhood (attracted by its edgy charm, no doubt) and spread their money around at the check cashing places, corner markets, and pawn shops. Everyone wins! That should be the name of this new development: Everyone Wins. You know, actually that's really what we should rename this whole fucking country: Everyone Wins.

You can find me at PO Box 28226, Providence, RI 02908. My birthday is March 9th and I'm having a contest to see who can send me the most cookies and cakes. I'm vegan and I love peanut butter, just in case you're interested. Beer also makes a lovely gift.



I'm gonna take you on a blast to the past this month, with a bunch of sites featuring old new wave and punk stuff. I've been reading some George Gimarc's *Punk Diary* and *Post Punk Diary* and it has me all nostalgic for the songs of yesteryear. Hell, I even listened to the Clash today! Then, towards the end of this month's column, I'm going to turn you onto some rock criticism sights. Not totally punk, but you'll probably find some stuff in the sites I've dug up that will interest you. Let's get to it already...

We'll start off with the Mod Pop Punk Archives (http://punkmodpop.free.fr/) which features late-70s and early-80s bands such as the Buzzcocks, the Chords, the Zeros, and bunches of bands you've probably never heard of. Included are incomplete discographies, bios, mp3 files, and even scans of rare picture sleeves. Unless you're only into hardcore, there will be something here you'll dig.

Another nice site for oldies is CollectorScum.com. There is a bunch of neat stuff here, including a discography of American punk, a cool section of test pressings and the like, a discography of Datapanik records, and, believe it or not, a listing of punk 8-track tapes. There are scans of most of the covers here, but no sound files. Its still totally worthwhile: http://www.collectorscum.com/ .

A great source to pick up some rare tunes at cheap prices is from Hyped To Death. Visit their CD archives at http://hyped2death.com/ . You can read liner notes, check out scans of rare sleeves, and even listen to a few mp3s. And, if you find stuff you like, you can order a CD for around ten bucks. They have 60 plus CDs out now of bands from all over the world.

Next up is Break My Face, a site that doesn't have as many bands as some of the others I've mentioned, but makes up for it by giving lots of information on the bands that they do feature. Included here is information about Dangerhouse records, stuff on the Vomit Pigs, Urinals, Black Flag, the Rotters, and some 30 or so others. Each section has several paragraphs about each band, scans of the picture sleeves of some of their records, and more. You'll find Break My Face at http://www .breakmy face.com/ .

For a nice archive of punk and new wave bootlegs, look no further than Marko's site at http://www.lwtua.free-online.co.uk/0.htm (that's a zero at the end). A lot of this is new wave dreck, but there is also some classic 77-era punk. Each bootleg listing includes a cover scan, a track listing, and where it was recorded, but there are no song samples. Bummer.

Speaking of new wave, there is a page of classic new wave photos available http://www.newwavephotos.com/ . This is the archive of rock photographer Philippe Carly and there are some really nice shots here. Be warned, though—the Buzzcocks are about as punk as this site gets. Poke around and you'll also find an archive of concert tickets and backstage passes.

Another photographic archive is Rockometer (http://www.rockometer.com/) which includes shots of the Damned, Stiff Little Fingers, the Buzzcocks, and X, among others. The photos are not from way back in the day, but are from late-80s through late-90s shows that the bands played. Great photo work here.

I've always like rock criticism, even if what I sometimes like about it is that I hate what critics have to say. I just find reading others opinion about music to be refreshing, especially if it is of a more philosophical nature (rather than a simple record review). While most critics are probably bloated windbags who couldn't hold down a real job, I still like reading a well-written piece of rock journalism. With that in mind, I went searching for sites that deal with writing about rock music.

The first (and most obvious) site I found was Rock

Critics.com (http://www.rockcritics.com/). RockCritics. com features both exclusive content written by rock journalists, as well as archives of older rock writing. In addition, there is a fun 'top 5' list section, and information on how you can contribute to the site.

The other decent site for music journalist types is at http://www.musicjournalist.com/ . This is the homepage of the Association of Music Writers and Photographers. Of course, the idea that this group exists is kinda icky, but some of the articles here are interesting and/or thought provoking.

If you don't give a shit about professional critics, then why not be one yourself? The Rate Your Music website at http://rateyourmusic.com/ is an interesting idea. It is a database of albums where you give them one to five stars and leave reviews of each album. You can add albums to the site, and you can look up what other people think of certain music. It's like having a dozen friends tell you whether or not a record sucks. The punk content is weak, but that's only because we haven't discovered it yet.

That's gonna wrap things up for this month. Hope you enjoyed the blast from the past. A reminder that you can find all of my columns in the netpunk section of http://www.diehippiedie.com/ and that you should be sending me your websites for mention and review to netpunk@diehippiedie.com. See ya.

Patriarchy Tried to Steal My Guitar

If you somehow missed my last column, I was pissed that I usually don't see as many girls on stage as boys. I also wondered *why* there aren't more women and girls in punk bands today.

I didn't have many answers, other than looking at how average American punk bands form these days. Most people I know started getting into punk bands in high school, learning to play their instruments with a few good friends who equally sucked, but who were into playing punk songs and hanging out together. Thinking of the high school years, I mentioned in my column that guys sometimes have an advantage, in that they are encouraged more to be in bands, and have more friends who are in bands to jam with and borrow gear from. Parents are also more restrictive of teenage girls, and it's a time when gender roles come harshly into our lives.

I had started, very briefly, to connect the dots between playing guitar, and life growing up being defined as a "girl."

Distortion follows me everywhere, and I try to hang onto the power chords.

Since handing over my column to the *MRR* Column Gods last month, I've been thinking more about this issue, trying to get a better sense of it. Last month I was left with more questions than answers, and felt like I'd just scratched the surface. Gender roles, girls and boys, punk rock, shows, playing guitar, screaming, bands, sexism, all these things stewed in my mind and began to coalesce into something dark and familiar. I thought again of an experience not quite yet forgotten, not quite buried, growing up girl, becoming assimilated as "female," and all the baggage and scars that come along for the ride. I also pieced together these inklings with the thoughts and experiences of other women, checked in with our shared history, and things began to take on a clearer shape.

Fuck, does everything have root causes? What million things in society shape who we are today? Even when we think we've rejected it?

It would be easy if I could just write the whole thing off. At the Juice Bar in Orleans, MA, I asked a young girl at the show why she thought more girls weren't in punk bands. She replied, "Girls are pussies."

Hear the hum and crackle of a loose connection about to catch fire.

Later that night, I talked about this sexist attitude on stage (without pointing her out specifically) and said at the top of my lungs, "I think that's *fucking bullshit*."

At the time I was offended, mostly just shocked. It definitely wasn't in the realm of what I expected her to say. I wish now, that I had talked more about it with her instead of stewing in my own thoughts, and had given her a better explanation of why it pissed me off. Her answer was honest and revealing, and since then I've thought a lot about that comment, and how it fits in with everything else about girls and guitars.

We have to ask ourselves, how deeply have our minds been colonized?

Trying to get more opinions than my own, I talked to both kids and older punks at shows in Boston and Baltimore, on Cape Cod, downtown DC, and in a pizza shop in Manassas since I last tried to hammer out a few words on the subject of girls in bands last month. Thanks to everyone who shared cheap beers and thoughts with me, especially Gretchen, Amy, James Vertigo, Adam, Scott of THE OVERPRIVILEGED (who gave us amazing hot vegan death chili and made our southern venture possible), and the girls who danced at the show in Manassas. On the long stretch of highway from Virginia back to Boston, and the thousand miles we drove that weekend, I curled up in the back of the PROFITS van with an amazing book that I just discovered, *Listen Up: voices from the next feminist generation.* I know, the title sounds cheesy as hell, but, in my critical opinion, it completely rules. When I first spied the book in a molding pile in Discovery, the best used bookstore in the world, and read a few random pages, I started laughing out loud. The writing is so right on without apology. The girls and women who share their stories and personal insights in *Listen Up* helped feed my head this month, and I'll quote a few passages here.

I'm still pissed, but I'm also curious. I'm not surprised that aspects of sexism happen in punk rock, and that's not really my main point for this article. I'm also *not* out to man-bash, as if you need a reminder. What is interesting to me is how profoundly we all have been conditioned to think—from our earliest childhoods—about gender and our identity in society. Patriarchy, the artificial imbalance of power between men and women, affects us all in negative ways that we are often unaware of, even in punk fucking rock.

Let me begin with "women are pussies" and how it relates to one aspect of the present ratio of only about one SPITBOY all-girl band for about every twenty RAMONES all-boy bands out there.

All too often, young women are encouraged to hate each other, and themselves. It's a fucked up, but predictable, response to the gender hierarchy that is constantly being shoved down our throats. The repeated message is that women are inferior, need approval from men, and are in constant competition with other women. Think of Molly Ringwald in *The Breakfast Club*. Molly's character played the gender game, and with her money, good looks, and tight sweaters, earned a space in the popular high school click. She had the approval of the "in" crowd. If you haven't seen this 80s classic, Molly's character is forced to look at her falseness by the metal dude, and she falls for him in the end. She symbolizes her subtle break with the system by giving metal dude one of her diamond earrings, separating her perfect set. Yes, I've seen this rockin' movie too many times, and I digress.

Girls, like boys, are told from a young age that competition matters, but in different ways. Men have the Super Bowl, and women have Miss America. Both events promote extreme stereotypes of gender, honoring beefy men and skinny women, but there are worlds of difference. Teams go to the Super Bowl, while individual women fight it out to wear the Miss America crown. While the very nature of a team is to work together, and to score the most points, at a beauty pageant beauty stars are on their own and it all depends on a judge's whim. The men compete against the other team and the clock, and the women compete for a (traditionally male) judge's approval.

In her book *Feminism is for Everybody*, bell hooks pointed out, "Male bonding was an accepted and affirmed aspect of patriarchal culture. It was simply assumed that men in groups would stick together, support one another, be team players, place the good of the group over individual gain and recognition. Female bonding was not possible within patriarchy; it was an act of treason."

Take a more modern Hollywood example, *Joe Millionaire.* Twenty women competed against each other to win the approval of some schmuck Fox said had millions of dollars, who is actually an out-of-work second-rate model. I couldn't help but watch as a woman who was not given a pearl necklace and "asked to continue" cried into the camera. It was sad. It was sad because the woman who didn't get picked by schmuck boy was

so distressed, and wondered aloud, "What's wrong with me? Why didn't he pick me?" She just didn't get it. She was judging her self-worth compared to other women—as superficially judged by some schmucky guy—and when I see that scenario on "real life" television, I wonder what the hell is wrong with this place I'm living in.

Women are more than the sum of hair, tits, lack of body fat, and ass. But sexism sells, and the media conglomerates make billions in advertising dollars, and the cosmetic, fashion, and diet industries make billions from selling worthless crap to women. Capitalism tells us what we want, how we should look, creates needs and faults, and sells everything back to us in a plastic bag. Capitalism works hand in hand with patriarchy to bombard girls and women with toxic Barbie images of who we should be, pummeling our individuality and self worth in a shower of acid pink propaganda that tells us we aren't good enough.

Christine Doza wrote in "Bloodlove" in *Listen Up* about the mire of worthless magazines targeted at young women like *Glamour* and *Sassy*, "I don't need to be told what band is the cutest, what hairstyle is the most fashionable, what brand of clothes is the coolest. I need to know that every minute of every day I am being colonized, manipulated, and ignored, and that minute by minute I am doing this to others who are not shining white and middle class. There is a system of abuse here. I need to know what part I'm playing in it."

When women are pitted against each other, we lose sight of what is really going on. It's one way in which the patriarchy protects itself. We can't challenge the whole fucking system of abuse when we are too busy tearing each other down and hating ourselves.

The poet Sapphire in *Angry Women* stated, "Deep self-hatred keeps a lot of people's energy and creativity sapped. The very forces that could be harnessed to fight fascism and imperialism are being drained off into 'fitting in' and 'being accepted."

But most punk girls already know this, and have already broken free of more mainstream society's gender boxes. To do so, however, meant standing out, and being targeted for not going along with the gender rules.

Sharon Lennon wrote in "What is Mine" in *Listen Up*, "Alienation is a key ingredient to keeping girls and women performing according to plan. It's the backup system just in case the initial instructions on being female don't sink in." Basically, there are consequences to not following the rules. Standing up for your individuality, and breaking free of stereotypes, isn't always easy, and sexist pricks—both boys and girls—try to put people back into gender cages.

I remember one horrible show in Boston some five years ago, a low point for our entire scene. It was summer, and hot as hell. Lots of people turned out for the show, and the Greek American Club was fairly packed with a couple hundred punks. It had been almost all-boys on stage for hours, and the only redeeming quality was that it was DISASTER STRIKES's first show if I remember right. The headlining band for the day was an all-woman hardcore punk band from NYC, and they were good. As I mentioned, it was hot as hell, and lots of the guys in the audience had taken off their shirts. After a few songs, the girls in the band took off their shirts, too. It was no big deal, as they were all wearing bras, clothing larger than most bikini tops.

The crowd retaliated. Boys started chanting, "Take it off! Take it off!" and a couple of guys simulated butt fucking in the pit. Girls joined in and yelled, "Put it back on! You whores!" It was bizarre, and very serious, and outright hostile. The band was attacked from both sides, but they kept on playing. All I could do was channel my anger and fuck shit up in the previously all-boy pit.

Ironically, the show was a benefit for the beginnings of a Boston Riot Grrrl chapter. Fucked up shit, my friends.

Emma Goldman, the illustrious anarchist, stated in *The Tragedy of Women's Emancipation*, "The right to vote, or equal civil rights, may be good demands, but true emancipation begins neither at the polls nor in the courts. It begins in woman's soul."

The first battle for freedom, on all levels, occurs in our minds.

Girls and women have to learn to undo what has been stuffed into our heads. Self-hatred makes everything harder. Self-doubt destroys confidence, and that makes getting on stage and speaking your mind even more of a challenge. Add to that the threats of harassment and lack of support, and many girls don't even bother trying to start a band.

But many girls and women *do* find a way through the bullshit, and come out stronger on the other side. They tell the media images to go fuck themselves.

An early Bitch Crew manifesto stated, "Be a woman, be a girl, be whatever the fuck you want to be. Just do me the favor and kill yourself before you pour yourself into a mold of commercial images soaked in Palmolive packaged in a douche bag."

HA!

There are thousands of pissed off, confident, strong punk girls waiting to start an army to change the world. But still, why aren't more women in bands?

Let's return to the noisy beginnings of most punk bands, in the hundreds of dark basements all across the country, and look again for possible answers.

A, a friend and personal heroine of mine, told me about her best friends growing up, who all happened to be guys. By high school, the gang of friends had all started a band, all of them but A. She wasn't invited to practice or jam with them, as A was told it was a "guy thing." The same scenario happened to me in high school. My good guy friends had a couple of bands together, and they would jam all the time and make up absurd funny songs. I was never asked if I wanted to hang out and play, or sing, it was just unspoken that it was a "guy thing" and I would make them feel uncomfortable. At the time, I felt left out but didn't want to impose. The closest they came to letting me jam with them was playing a dust-buster on a home four-track recording.

In both cases, it was understood that it was natural for all the guys to hang out together in the band, and just plain weird for a girl to tag along.

Well, foo on all of them!

Those guys couldn't see past the gender roles. Not all guys are dicks, however, and I salute those men and boys who see past gender to treat all their friends—not just the ones with dicks—with the respect they deserve. My first band, the illustrious FUCK TUBES, was with two women and a man. In my band now with three guys, gender isn't a problem. I also know of a ton of bands, as I'm sure you do, where girls and boys play together and rock the house. Boston's FALLEN SHORT and AND I CAN'T WAIT..., along with classic NAKED AGGRESSION come immediately to mind.

Also, sexism is not just a woman's issue. Men need to be talking about how they fit in with patriarchy, and how it negatively affects their lives, as well. I am always so happy to hear LEON CZOLGOSZ, an all-guy band, play their song, "Pro-Life is Terrorism." It rocks my world. Men gain the most from sexism, but they also suffer from stereotypes, harassment and gender expectations too. In the larger picture, sexism is part of a larger system of oppression that we all live in, with a few billionaires at the top of the heap looking down on everyone else. As my black clad friends say while taking over Newberry Street, "NO WAR BUT THE CLASS WAR."

I encourage all the girls and women out there reading this humble piece of newsprint—start a band if you want to! Don't let anyone tell you that you're somehow not good enough. Playing punk rock is *easy*. It just takes a lot of time in dirty basements to get the tip of your fingers numb to the wires, and a few real friends who appreciate you for who you are. If the people around you aren't supportive, and you can't find other women or men to start a band with, put up fliers, get on the web, and keep asking around until you find them. Borrow, buy, beg, use credit cards, or steal equipment if you have to. Don't wait until you have enough money for a "good" guitar, any piece of crap will do. You also don't need a full drum set, or even a PA to get started practicing, having fun and making songs. Make someone let you play in their basement, or toss your bedroom furniture out the window to make room for the drums. If you want to start a band, don't wait until you're "good," don't wait to take boring lessons and get a "technique," just start screaming and making noise, and the rest will follow later. Above all, don't let patriarchy steal your voice or your guitar!

I can't resist ending this column with the chorus of one of my favorite songs ever, by the SPIDER CUNTS from NYC:

"You'll get yours, what goes around comes around. You try to create a world for me full of fear and hate, but I won't take the bait. You can scar my skin, but you can never scar what comes from within. Try to intimidate me, make me afraid to speak my

mind, what doesn't kill me makes me stronger, and I'm not the only one of my kind. *I'm not the only one of my kind!"*

HA! Gender liberation includes all of us.

Rock on, and in solidarity, Erika

ransom@plaguedomes.com

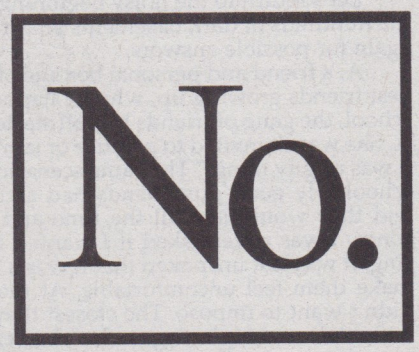
Resources:

Listen Up: voices from the next feminist generation, Barbara Findlen, Editor. Seal Press (www.sealpress.com)

Feminism is for Everybody, bell hooks. South End Press (www.southendpress.org)

You can see my past columns at www.theprofits.org/ransom-notes.htm

Oakland, CA. (AP)



An important development in the War On Terror occurred yesterday when a converted warehouse located in an impoverished area of East Oakland was quarantined due to an outbreak of malaria in which large numbers of residents were hospitalized and arrested, according to a press conference organized by the Office Of Homeland Security.

The warehouse in question sheltered and employed numerous individuals associated with the so-called "punk" movement which began as a primarily musical force in the mid-1970s in New York, London, and Los Angeles and has steadily politicized itself to an increasingly far leftist/terrorist slant, according to the Office Of Homeland Security. The space in East Oakland is reputed to have housed a crude laboratory where potent biological weapons were being developed.

"As soon as we broke down the metal door, one of our agents nearly stumbled and fell into an open bio-weapon retaining tank," Biff Whitey of the FBI asserted in his statement, "It's a good thing we were fully outfitted in decontamination suits. One of the suspected terrorists approached us yelling something obviously in code to the other residents: "You coulda fuckin' knocked! I know my rights!' I believe it was, and we apprehended him with massive force in order to keep him from setting off any further alarms."

According to the Office Of H.S., the holding tank was cleverly disguised as a kiddie pool filled with half-full beer cans, but when one of the agents nudged it with his foot several thousand superpotent malaria-laden mosquitoes swarmed out of the tank and immediately dispersed around the 20-room warehouse, biting nearly all of the residents within minutes of their release. "It's a damned good thing that our agents were fully outfitted for such contingencies," agent Whitey continued in the briefing, "Imagine if they dropped this tank into a crowded subway during rush hour, or left it in front of the federal building, or an elementary school. Since the release of the biological agent was in the confines of the largely windowless warehouse, it was concentrated on the population there and thus will not come to effect the bulk of the community. The rest of the block, of course, had to be quarantined and the residents arrested, as a quick search of the block found numerous Malarial and Botulism incubators, many smaller than the so-called 'kiddie pool' but no less potent. We feel that neighbors, while not necessarily directly associated with the warehouse, were at the very least sympathizers and possibly traded weapons and chemicals with them."

"As these individuals are considered to be highly dangerous terror suspects and seem to harbor a serious disregard for the federal government and its policies, we are taking them into custody where we will hold them indefinitely until we decide what information they know and what we decide to charge them with. We do not know for sure at this time whether they are linked with Al Qaeda, but we plan to pursue any leads in that direction that may materialize and will probably hold the suspects until these leads become evident."

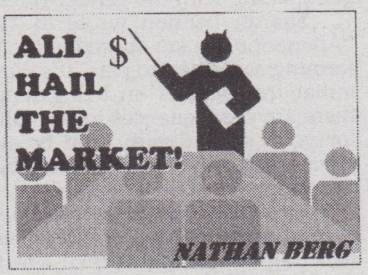
From the first house on the next block over, Winda Smith of Oakland watched the police action. "They dragged them all out of they houses and threw 'em in cop cars and ambulances. I don't know what the fuck is going on. They was grabbing all the empty beer cans and full garbage bags and putting them in these big-ass yellow containers that said 'Biohazard' all over 'em. We ain't had trash pickup here for over a month since the landlord who owns the whole square mile stopped paying for it and we still can't get the city to do anything about him. Now the police are talking about burning down the whole damn neighborhood. It's them punk rock kids, fucking it up for everybody. They always bring the police in now."

Reportedly, over half of the former residents of the warehouse have died from malaria in the hospital. Agent Whitey: "It's unfortunate, because we could have gotten a lot of information out of them. We now believe some of the ones who died were the ringleaders, since the remaining terror suspects claim to have no knowledge of any bioterror programs. Make no mistake, however: These are vicious killers and proponents of terror, as evidenced by their attitude and the vehement anti-authoritarian propaganda that was found in abundance in their 'Cave,' as it were, the dissemination of which was of course the reason for the raid in the first place. You are either for us or against us, and these folks were definitely against us and against *you*, so you should be grateful that they are no longer going to be a problem. We are investigating other affiliated terror networks in cities around the world as we speak, and you may find out more about those investigations in due time, or maybe not. National security must be maintained, you know."

"Jimmy Scumfukk," one of the residents of the warehouse, was overheard on a live television feed at the scene yelling as he was dragged roughly to a paddy wagon/ambulance, "All we were trying to do was recycle, dude!"

The Office Of Homeland Security has made a statement that this outburst was obviously a coded threat meant to be heard by other cell members, and promptly raised the national security alert to the highest level as a result. Residents are advised to stay in their homes, keep tuned in to their televisions, and to watch what they say and do.

—Johnny King Dirt, PO Box 3026, Oakland, CA 94609. Johngeek@hotmail.com



Last month, I talked about image and the various ways that corporations can use it to their benefit. This month, as promised, we'll take a look at the most common tool they use to defend said image: trademarks (I just know you've been waiting all month for this one).

My dictionary tells us that a trademark is a "word, symbol, or device registered and protected by law, used by a merchant or manufacturer to distinguish his goods" (I'd like to note that, according to the Scribner-Bantam folks, girls can't be merchants or manufacturers). I mentioned last month about how a great number of multinationals are selling more image than product these days, which are commonly referred to as "brands." In truth, what these companies are selling is their trademark. This is a logo, name, or phrase (or, most likely, all of the above) which is used for product association and, thereby, as a money maker.

In a certain regard, trademarks (and their cousins, the copyrights) don't make any sense. "Words, symbols, and devices" are human constructs, coming from sounds, images, and things. For example, the sounds "nigh" and "key," when put together, create a trademark of the Nike Corp. Same for the sounds "juhst," "dew," and "ehht." Both of these sound combinations are trademarks, bizarre, for they are perfectly legal to say and write, but not in every situation. Simply put, trademarks can take common elements of human language and art, and turn them into things that could land you in court if you should use them in the wrong way.

While trademarks can almost seem wrong in a primitive sense, it's pretty easy to see why we have them in our society. Products/names/images *do* need a certain amount of protection in this and age, to prevent both consumer confusion and profiting-by-association. For instance, you could safely bet that if Hearst Publishing began publishing a new magazine for the international, Top 40 youth and called it *Maximum Rocknroll*,

somebody down at headquarters would start lookin' to take some legal action (although they've remained on relatively peaceful terms with the Mississippi River Riders thus far, so who knows?). And rightfully so. If someone turns a major profit through the outright theft of someone else's ideas, that's bad. But if they can do it by actually using the earned recognition of someone or something and turning the reason for it's recognition on its head, that's worse. Can you imagine, despite their past exclamations of trademark/copyright hatred, if PROPAGANDHI songs started popping up in ads for the American Beef Council? What if Chevrolet started using clips of Ralph Nader for their ads? GORILLA BISCUITS and Absolut Vodka? Critical Mass and Exxon Mobil? Apple Computers and Gandhi? Levi's Jeans and the DEAD KENNEDYS? Trademarks can help defend oneself against appearing to support those things that, in reality, they oppose or resist (but not all the time, as the last two examples have already occurred).

But just because trademarks have a rightful place in our society doesn't mean that all is well with them. Corporations have systematically used trademarks, and the laws intending to uphold them, for their own financial game, something that probably shouldn't come as much of a surprise since they pretty much use every weapon imaginable for said purpose.

We have gotten to the point where corporations and their brands have taken over our culture. Like many other things in our culture that we have decided to fight against, people have both the urge and the inherent right to speak back to these brands. But through these various trademark and copyright protections, corporations have been largely successful at stifling any *real* threat to their images, even if the image they display is little more than an elaborate hoax. As Naomi Klein (whose book, *No Logo*, I recommended to you last month) explains: "[Trademark laws are] easily abused statutes that form an airtight protective seal around the brand, allowing it to brand us, but prohibiting us from so much as scuffing it."

But it doesn't just amount to corporations trying to fight off the backlash against their presence in every nook and cranny of our social conscience. Multinationals have thousands of past (and present) cases of "trademark protection" that range from the frivolous to the absurd. Some of the examples that Klein gives in her book are McDonald's constant attacks on small business owners of Scottish descent, Mattel's rapid attacks of anyone who dares to mess with Barbie, and The Lyons Group's threats to sue any parent that dresses up as their trademark-protected purple dinosaur at their children's birthday parties. Bill Wyman, a music columnist for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, just received word a few months ago from a law firm in New York that he can no longer use his own given name because of its uncanny resemblance to Bill Wyman, a former bass player for the Rolling Stones (the most interesting aspect of which is that the Stones' Wyman is the one who wasn't born with the name.)

In one of the more fascinating developments yet, the US Supreme Court has just taken on a strange case of unusual importance. In *Moseley v. V Secret Catalogue*, the court must draw up real lines in the sand where trademarks end and the rest of life begins. Victor Moseley and his wife owned and operated an adult store in Kentucky called Victor's Secret. They received a cease-and-desist letter from the fine folks at Victoria's Secret, claiming they would be sued for "trademark dilution" if they didn't change the name of their store. Kindly (considering how pissed I would been had it happened to me and my adult store), Moseley obliged and change his store's name to "Victor's Little Secret." However, this was not a big enough change for Victoria and crew, so they sued anyway and had two lower courts rule in their favor. In this final appeal, it must be decided what constitutes "trademark dilution," and what means an accuser must do to prove that it has occurred.

This case and the law being questioned in it, even though it's seemingly a 'business vs. bigger business' ordeal, is of no small significance to anti-corporate activists. When the laws protecting the symbols, phrases, and names of typically deceptive and oppressive brands and companies become too strong, we will stand to risk further punishment for doing what's right and fighting back against the images that form our sad "reality." Thankfully, "fighting back" isn't something governable by law.

End stuff.

1. The day after I wrote last month's column, in which I gave an overview of how image and reality differ in the case of the Royal Dutch Shell Co., I was flipping through a Lego catalogue (don't ask) and saw that you can now buy a hefty Lego set that forms a idyllic Shell gas station. What's next?
2. Write me: Nathan Berg, c/o Rainbow Bookstore Cooperative, 426 W. Gilman St. Madison, WI 53703. Send me zines (or root beer).

THE WIG

It was one of those cold April days where your breath still hung in the air after you finished talking. The sun, along with our winter jackets, kept us warm on our walk along 34th Street until we reached Macy's. As we entered the place, I could feel that stuffy, uncomfortable warmth that always seems to hug big department stores in the city during the winter. With me was my stepdad, Nick, and my mom, Barbara. She had only a few months to live because of the fast progression of the lung cancer she was diagnosed with some months earlier. She had finished many rounds of Chemo, and was now ending her radiation treatments at Sloan-Kettering.

The reason we had ventured to Macy's that day was, well, odd. We had gone there to buy her a wig. The cancer had spread from her lungs throughout her entire body, and was now in her head. Her brain. This is called metastasis. Nice word for an ugly thing. Actually, there are lots of nice words that are used with cancer. To *soften* the blow. Wonderful.

As we walked through the ground floor of Macy's toward the rear elevators, I could smell all the perfumes and after shaves. But somehow, they didn't linger in my nose like they usually did. All I could smell was the stuffy uncomfortableness of the place.

We got off the elevator at the third or fourth floor and followed the signs to the wig department. It was just a couple of enclosed glass cabinets adjacent to each other, tucked away in a far corner of Macy's.

Behind one of the counters stood an older gentleman, and behind him, various wigs placed stylishly upon Styrofoam heads that were faceless and eyeless.

The man's smile was warm as he greeted us. Nick and I smiled back, but my mother didn't. There was a woman trying on wigs in front of a table top mirror, and when she saw us, she turned and smiled. We smiled back to her as we watched her adjust the wig on her head, with the price tag hanging off the back and all. My mom, again, didn't smile.

"It's all right, sweetie," said the woman to my mom, "everything is gonna be all right." My mom, with a scarf covering her quickly balding head, just nodded.

"You'll get used to it," she added, "really, you will."

I looked at Nick, and he looked at me. And we both smiled. But they weren't real smiles. They were smiles of fear and desperation. We didn't know what else to do.

"Which one should I get?" my mom asked Nick and I. We had trouble understanding what she said at first because her tongue was swollen from all the Chemo and radiation and stuff.

We looked at the wall of faceless heads for a long time not saying anything. The reason my mom had wanted a wig was because I had planned a trip to Cancun with my brothers, Wendy, Nick that was to take place in a couple of weeks. I figured it would be our last chance to all be together, and of course, I was right. I fucking hate being right.

Nick and I and my mom looked at the wigs, and to tell you the truth, I had no fucking clue which one she should get. There were black straight ones. There were blonde curly ones. They even had a punk rock colored one. Somehow, I didn't think my mom wanted that one.

"Nice wigs, huh?" said the woman in front of the table top mirror, "I already have a couple, this is going to be my third!"

Nick and I just looked at her and smiled. My mom seemed off in a daze.

"It's really not that bad," explained the woman, "in fact, your mother can have the hair she has always wanted."

We nodded our heads, and I was surprised Nick didn't

make any bad jokes. I guess it just wasn't one of those days.

We continued to look at all the wigs, lost in our frustration over this insane situation. A situation we thought we'd never find ourselves in. Ever.

"Why don't you describe the kind of hair your mother used to have?" said the woman to me. And to Nick.

Nick and I began to describe it to her as my mom stood there, listening. We explained that her hair was brownish-blonde and very, very beautiful. As Nick started to explain the texture and feel of it, I could see his emotions tearing him apart. He knew he'd never feel or smell the real stuff again. I felt tears welling up in my eyes, and saw them in Nick's.

It was then I think my mom somehow snapped out of that cancer-morphine haze and told Nick and I to go shopping, and to leave her alone at the wig counter. She told Nick to take me to the electronic games department and buy me whatever I wanted. She told us to come back in a little while, and she'd be fine.

Nick and I walked away from my mom, the woman with the wigs, and the guy behind the counter, feeling very uncomfortable. We did not want to leave her alone, so we didn't. We just went around the corner, and peeked over at her ever few seconds.

I watched my mom try on all sorts of wigs. As she would try each one on, she'd look in the mirror and brush the hair as if it were her own. The man behind the counter smiled warmly at her as she brushed the various wigs she was trying on. I could see in the way that she brushed and stroked the hair that she missed her own, and was feeling what it was like to have a full head of hair again. I quickly wiped a tear from my cheek, hoping Nick didn't see it.

Finally my mom put on a wig and wore it for more than a few minutes. She just kept staring at herself in the table-top mirror, and brushing and caressing the hair. The man behind the counter just smiled, and the woman who was trying on other wigs was telling my mom she looked great in it.

Nick and I walked back to the wig department and to my mom. When she saw us, she smiled A warm smile. A smile I'll carry with me forever. On her head was a wig that looked exactly like her hair. Only it was shorter than she had worn it recently. It was the kind of hairstyle she had worn about twenty years earlier. And it made her look younger. Like the mom I remember when she pushed me on the swing set. Or when I sat in her lap. Or when she bathed me. The same hair. The same mom. She was beautiful. Like a mother. She was beautiful. Like a woman.

I felt a lump begin to rise in the back of my throat, and looked at my mom. She looked at me, and suddenly I wanted to be in her arms. To be hugging her, cradled in her warmth. Safe from the world. I wanted to be home again. The lump in my throat got bigger. My mom looked me in the eyes, then put her finger to her lip. And I knew all was said that had to be.

I'll never forget my mom and that wig, that cold winter day at Macy's. That day my mom had stood up in the face of all that was wrong, and had reminded Nick and I about pride and courage. She had tried on wigs, majestically, and somehow, with synthetic material on her head, had shown us the true meaning of beauty. She took away our uneasiness and fears with just the smallest of a smile, and let us know that life was worth living.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1.Looks like Roach Motel is doing some reunion gigs in Florida. Go to www.georgetabb.com for details.

2.Dean Dean and The Sex Machines, The Kick, Worse & The Shemps rule.

3.9inches@georgetabb.com

I Believe in Myself

The TEMPLARS—reigning skinhead band in the entire world, came to Southern California to play for the first time in Orange County and Los Angeles County. The first night the show was in the Showcase Theater in Corona, California, and this all-ages venue was full of skins and punks of all descriptions, ready to hear the TEMPLARS play their hits!

PRESSURE POINT, from Sacramento, and the REDUCERS SF, from San Francisco, played brilliant opening sets. Then the TEMPLARS took the stage. The air was positively electric with skinhead excitement! The band delivered a crack set of skinhead/Oi! tunes. Excellent! There was not one fight!! The second night was at the Martini Lounge, in Hollywood. This venue served alcohol, much to the great pleasure of the skins. We had another night of top quality music with no trouble! Again, not one fight! Great! The sets of music were similar the two nights with several substitutions/additions each night. Songs the TEMPLARS played included: "Templars;" "Skins and Punks;" "Four Walls;" "Video Age;" "New York;" "Gun Runner;" "War in the Streets;" "Skinhead Rules OK;" "Never Fade Away;" "Bovver Boy;" "I Believe in Myself;" "The Glory that Was;" "Revenge;" "Terror Tactic;" "Police Informer;" "Night of the Seagull;" the amazing song, "Breakdown" from *Horns of Hattin*; and three excellent covers: "Career Opportunities" by THE CLASH; "Case of Pride" by SKREWDRIVER; and " Violence In Our Minds" by the LAST RESORT. These were a great pair of shows musically! These shows go far to demonstrate a positive example of coherent behavior in the skinhead scene. Hopefully we will see more intelligent interaction so that we can have more shows in more venues in many cities. Thanks go out to PRESSURE POINT, the REDUCERS SF and the TEMPLARS.

Haunted Town Records from Chicago has an excellent new split six-song CD available for you punks and skins! DEAD LINE, from England, start the CD rolling, and BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS, from the USA, finish it off.

DEAD LINE come out cranking with a cover of "Another Day in Paradise" by ON FILE. This has great male/female trade-off vocal duties. Then Liz and DEAD LINE slam into "Hate Song." Read these words: "Pressure is on me/ I can't breathe/ I can't see/ Your fucking ignorance is beyond me/ Try to take control of feelings lost/ I can't see any hope/ My rage runs deep/ When it's all over/ You'll realize your fate/ You'll open up to life instead of your own hate/ You're two-faced/ I hate you both/ Cos you talk shit/ And soon you'll see/ What you say and what you do will bring you down/ You can run and hide from me/ But you won't run for long/ You see your attitude is pissing me off/ Shut your mouth." Good shit! Next up you get DEAD LINE singing "I'll Run Away"—excellent!

Song four is brought to you by BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS. "Vultures" is good Oi! The "Ballad of Lucas Wells" mourns a friend who died young. Damn good guitar parts push this song along. Song number six is a cover of Tom Petty's "American Girl." This is a strong cover!

For Haunted Town product write to: Haunted Town Records, 1658 N. Milwaukee Ave. #169, Chicago, IL 60647, USA; www.hauntedtownrecords.com.

Ethan and Reality Clash Records from Dana Point, California, have a new split CD available for you! The new product is a split between TERMINUS CITY and NO HOLDS BARRED, and it's called *Stand As One*. NO HOLDS BARRED start the melee with the title cut, "Stand As One," and this track kicks ass! Next up is "The Price," about skinhead persecution—great! Next up you get "Just a Kid"—a kind of country-flavored number about a mother worried over her child. "American Rights" bemoans all the youth raised with a silver spoon in their mouths—not willing to endure the bruises and hardships of growing up. The next song is a really good rocker! "Blaze of Glory," is about living fast and hard, and dying young. It's akin to Mr. Lemmy Kilminster singing: "Gambling's for fools and I know I'm bound to lose, but I don't want to live forever" in "Ace of Spades." Read the lyrics to "Blaze of Glory:" "I smoke a pack a day/ And I drink my liver away/ That's OK if I die today/ Drinkin' and drivin' way too fast/ I'm not afraid of my own death/ You wanna go out peacefully!/ That might be what you want!/ That's not the way it's gonna be!/ No guts no glory!/ I'm going out in a blaze of glory/ And I'm taking you all down with me/ I'm going out in a blaze of glory/ The devils comin' after me/ I'm not the type/ To go without a fight/ But when my time comes/ I hope it'll be right/ Being shot down/ In a hail of gunfire/ That's how I would like to expire/ You wanna go out peacefully!/ That might be what you want!/ That's not the way it's gonna be/ No guts no glory!" "Vultures" finishes off the NO HOLDS BARRED half of the *Stand As One* CD. Very good!

With song number seven, TERMINUS CITY takes up the battle cry with "Set Me Free" In "Stinking World," Frank reflects

on fatherhood and laments the violence that children are faced with. In "Too Stupid," TERMINUS CITY attribute their tenacity to being "Just Plain Dumb." Next up Frank and the boys do a nice cover of Kim Wilde's "Kids of America." Song number twelve is "The Blame," about assuming responsibility for your actions. Next up is "Glass Tower," with some good lyrics about people who judge you by how much money you make. Read these words: "You sit in your glass tower/ Looking down your nose at me/ Say that my friends and I/ Are the dregs of society/ So you make another million/ While I try to raise my children/ And all of us down here/ Are trying hard to make ends meet/ Don't you look down at me/ We're trying hard to make ends meet/ We aren't very cultured/ Don't know what fork to use/ Our friends aren't affluent/ Wall Street doesn't bring us news/ My account is empty/ I'm far from upper crust/ But if I'm in some trouble/ I've got people I can trust/ So you make another million/ While I try to raise my children/ And all of us down here/ Are trying to make ends meet/ We all didn't have the chance/ For a higher education/ We're proud of those that did/ And rose above their situation/ Summer vacation for me is/ Work and the public pool/ I can't afford your country club/ It doesn't make me a fool/ So you make another million/ While I try to raise my children/ And all of us down here/ Are trying hard to make ends meet." TERMINUS CITY has shown you once again why they are one of Georgia's most revered skinhead bands. Long may TERMINUS CITY prosper!

Also out on Reality Clash this month is BATTALION 86 from Richmond, Virginia. This is super-tough Oi! with gruff vocals. BATTALION 86 starts out with "Live Free or Die" and smashes right into "Strength For All" and "Give 'Em the Chair." "Once Was" bemoans how the "bureaucratic thugs" have so much power in our country today. "Forgotten Heroes" calls for respect and better treatment of war veterans. "The Coward" segues into "Fight the Fight" and "American Working Man" where Brad and Chris illucidate the pride of the working class in the USA. Read these lyrics: "The working man gets shit on again/ Sometimes it seems that he can't win/ Gives his all for his family/ So they can live their lives care free/ Scrappin' by on a petty wage/ Feelin like a rat in a cage/ Doesn't want the government's help/ He can do it by himself/ Pride, strength, dignity/ Doing the best he can/ Honor, respect, and loyalty/ He's the American Working Man!/ The working man stands above the rest/ No matter what he passes the test/ He's the backbone of the country/ Yet he's the one that nobody sees/ Loves his wife and kids/ They're the reason that he lives/ Day after day the works the same/ Feels like he's there for others gain/ Comes home again from the job/ After fighting the massive mob/ Pride is what motivates him/ To continue at this din/ His family loves and respects him/ They do their part to help him/ That is what it's all about/ Family strength will never give out!/ Got his family, has his friends/ For them, he'll go to any ends/ Sacrifice for those who count/ No price on loyalty, no amount/ Always there through thick and thin/ Doing his best for all of them/ All this returned with love and respect/ Strong people like that, what else you expect."

BATTALION 86 run through "Street Level Justice" "Us Against Them," "Steel Toe Alarm Clock" and finish up with a cover of the Last Resort's "Violence In Our Minds." This is rough and tumble American Oi! with deep and gruff vocals! Very hard shit indeed!

The third CD available from Reality Clash this month is Washington DC's COUNTERATTACK and their *State of Affairs* ten-song CD.

COUNTERATTACK start out with the title cut "State of Affairs." This song criticize's "Civil leaders stealing our rights/ Elected officials abuse their might/ Everybody bows to the CEOs." COUNTERATTACK moves through "Sledgehammer" into "Dave's Song" about a friend who left them behind and is sorely missed. "Brother Move On" is about a betrayal of someone who you thought was your friend and the permanence of "You Mean Nothing to Me." "Idiot Box" is about the evils of televised propaganda. Check out these lyrics to "Idiot Box": You don't care to inform/ Status quo you must maintain/ Have the power to break the norm/ You don't enlighten, just entertain/ We've surrendered our privacy/ For an information stream/ Gave birth to an agency/ That isn't what it seems/ Sensationalize and publicize/ Watch them achieve their goals/ Marginalize and vilify/ The news media takes control/ We get one-sided news/ We get no recompense/ Their issues and twisted views/ Will be our death sentence."

"Give a Damn" tells those righteous fools who are pushing their religion, designer drugs or fashion trends to stay the fuck away. "Choose Your Weapon" talks of the futility of the working man and his everyday struggle. Read this: "Soldiers march, fight and die/ Everlasting battle, no one questions why/ Conflict stretches until the end/ No cooperation, no one gives a damn/ Self-reliance is all you got/ To claw your way out of the rut/ It's not a cause we're all fighting for/ The battle's in the street and life's the war/ We're just rank, file cannon fodder/ It doesn't mean that we don't matter/ Only the strong of heart survive/ Choose your weapon to stay alive/ Fight with your fists and fight with your mind/ Because it's your life that's on the line/ Stand your ground and fight to be free/ Rise and claim your destiny/ Live every day like it's the last/ Future too soon, it becomes the past/ Sunrise to set, you've bled and wept/ When you fall, no one bats an eye/ NO legacy, so in vein you died/ Dead and buried, gone forever/ That's the working man's real future."

"Slavery" warns of the perils of drug addiction. "Twenty-One Guns" is a tribute to the veterans. COUNTERATTACK finishes off with their song "Skinheads." You get three good selections from Reality Clash Records this month! Write for your Reality Clash product to PO Box 491, Dana Point, CA 92629-0491; www.realityclash.com.

GMM Records has some fresh new selections for you this month. First up you get DISCIPLINE with some excellent street punk from Belgium circa July 2002. This is melodic sing-a-long punk not far removed from THE DROPKICK MURPHYS, with Al Barr at the helm. DISCIPLINE start off with "Everywhere We Go," slam into "Citizen's Revenge" and then tune up for a real catchy number, "Saints and Sinners." Song four is a "Dirty World" followed by "Death's Glory." "Dirty World" bears further investigation. Read the words to "Dirty World": "I remember the times when you were living on the street/ You had nowhere to go, you didn't have a place to sleep/ Well, I know what they say, that it's a dirty world out there/ But no on really gives a damn and nobody seems to care/ Like an outlaw on the run, running in a dead end street/ well in this world today, there's nothing for free/ Don't think about tomorrow/ Just living your life today/ Don't think about tomorrow/ You got to make it right today/ Don't think about tomorrow/ Living your life this way/ Don't think about tomorrow/ Cuz tomorrow it all fades away/ You've been gambling all your life, now you placed the wrong bet/ It seems that luck has turned on you, it's time to pay your debts/ It's the price you pay for freedom, freedom in your own way/ Yesterday don't mean shit, it's all bout today/ Time is ticking away as the years are passing by/ Now it's time for you to realize that you can't hide behind your lies."

"Broken Glass" is song number seven followed by a barn-burner, "Hail Hail Rock n' Roll." The song "Forever" leads into "City of Light," about the DISCIPLINE's home city. The lyrics to "Broken Glass" may be of interest to you: "He spends his days in misery only trying to survive/ Everyday the same old struggle just trying to get by/ Life is hard when you got no work and the bottle is your only friend/ Everyday so many wars to fight, It catches up with you in the end/ Broken glass all over/ In a life full of misery/ Broken glass all over/ Always trying to break free/ A broken man beyond his limits with no hope for better days/ He knows that time is running out, It slowly starts to slip away/ This cold and dirty world made him crack like a broken bottle on the floor/ One step forward and five steps back, he just couldn't take it no more/ Broken glass all over/ In a life full of misery/ Broken glass all over/ Always trying to break free/ With one foot in the gutter as the weight grew on his back/ He played with fire and he got burned, there was no turning back/ Broken glass all over/ In a life full of misery/ Broken glass all over/ Always trying to break free."

For their finale, the DISCIPLINE boys end with "These Boots." Good shit! This is certainly one of the European street-punk bands to keep an eye on!

Next up this month on GMM Records you get LOVED AND HATED from New York. The boys rip into it with seventeen songs of punk bile. You should check out their nasty attitude their song "Loved and Hated," the words go like this: "Welcome to the show/ Friends I see/ Let's celebrate like a victory/ Let's get drunk/ Have a good time/ Beer, liquor, and some really cheap wine/ Guilliani shut down the clubs/ Well fuck you/ I'm from the real New York/ Ladies in the scene/

How we love you/ Move around/ Show them what the fuck to do/ Loved and we're hated and we loved to fuck you/ Born to lose, so they say/ We're outlaws of society/ Banned from pubs and the clubs everywhere/ Loved to be hated and we don't care/ Live from New York/ Love that sound/ With everybody all around/ Hey ladies we still love you / Let me hear you scream/ We wanna fuck you too/ Loved and we're hated and we loved to fuck you." LOVED AND HATED plow through: "Until Tomorrow," "Dead Man's End," "No Sanity," "Abandoned," "Unity," "Dead Society," "Never Controlled," "Marital Law," "Suffocate," a really good rocker called "Shot Down," "I Hate You," "Underground.."and more! This is good shit!

Steel Cage Records has some musical treats for you punks! First up you get "The Cheesesteak Years" by the infamous RANCID VAT, currently residing in the Lone Star State. These Scum Rockers have been playing music longer than a lot of you punks have been on the planet. RANCID VAT was founded over a Ouija board, January 1, 1981 in Portland, Oregon by Phil Irwin, Marla Vee, and Steve Wilson. In 1994 Phil and Marla moved to Philly and joined forces with the Cosmic Commander of Wrestling and later Eric Perfect and Jimmy Satan. Early in 2002, Phil and Marla relocated RANCID VAT to San Marcos Texas.

The lead vocal duties on this jewel are preformed by none other than the Cosmic Commander of Wrestling, AKA "Cosmo" —and this shit is brilliant! Phil Irvin, "The Whiskey Rebel," plays bass, Marla Vee and Jimmy Satan play guitar and Eric Perfect plays drums. Check out this list of scum punk monsters: "Rock and Roll Party Patrol," "Jobjumper," "Sucker Punch," "Big City Blues," "Hot and Nasty," "Hostile City USA," "Mummer Massacre," "Loser Leave Town," "Old People," "Testify," "Blobs Have More Fun," "Tattoo Boogie," "Hippie Punk," "The Dancin' Outlaw," "The Darkest Souls in Rock and Roll," and "Rock and Roll Fraud"/ "Bruiser Brody." Great shit from one of the original nasty collections of negative people producing cutting-edge politically incorrect songs to live by.

The BAD VIBES from the beautiful Northeastern seaboard, USA have a kick ass CD prepared for you fucks. The CD is called, *Hate Your Everything*. Gavin comes right at you with "God Damned Again" and then injects even more venom with "Whole Lotta Nothing." Fucking rocking! the BAD VIBES plow through "Your Name Should Be Regret" and "Lifetime of Bad Days" and then you get a real treat! The song, "Long Since Gone" is great country scum punk like the mighty HAMMERLOCK!! We continue to slam through "Sorry Ass Me" and "Drunk on Sour Grapes" only to arrive at "War on You," which is really rocking shit! Next up you get a brutal fucking rock attack on your cerebellum with "Could You Be More Wrong." Fuck yes! This has got some of the urgency of an ANTiSEEN song! Great!! The final tune is the title cut "Hate Your Everything" and that says a mouthful!! Excellent Oi!

Next up on the Steel Cage Roster is the BULEMICS from Austin, Texas with their 2002 CD, "Soundtrack to the Apocalypse." This is raw Texas style punk with snotty shouted vocals and chugging full-force guitar attack. Check out the lyrics on the song, "Still Talkin' Shit": "Gonna make your sister suffer/ Once again and again and again/ We're still talkin' shit/ We're gods among men/ We'll steel your girlfriend/ Gonna hit the stage tonight/ And start a bunch of fights/ You say life ain't fair/ 'Cause your girlfriend can't be seen anywhere/ When we rolled through town/ I laid the mack down/ Like I didn't care/ But now it's all good/ 'Cause she's getting fucked just the way that she should/ To me it's just a fling/ I'm only doing all the things/ You only wish you could/ We're still talkin' shit/ My head's between your thighs/ And Satan's gonna rise/ It's time for your demise/ I'm laying pennies on your eyes."

The BULEMICS grace you with gems like "3 Seconds of Pleasure," "Crime Spree," "Hatefuck," Goddess of Wet Dreams," "Fuck the Night Away," "The Corrupter," "Tales of Immorality," "Goodbye Cruel World" and more! You get lots of good lyrics dealing with three of the favorite subjects for humans: sex, drugs and alcohol, throw some rock and roll in and you have a complete world!

For your essential Steel Cage Records product, including ANTiSEEN, LIMECELL, HAMMERLOCK, RANCID VAT, THE BAD VIBES, THE BULEMICS and lots more, write to the magnificent Leslie G at Steel Cage Records, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125, www.steelcagerecords.com.

FRACAS and THE EDDIE HASKELLS, two local San Francisco area punk bands, had a good split seven inch last year that you may have missed. Bad boys extraordinaire, THE EDDIE HASKELLS offer up two snotty punk rock ragers:"Dumpster Divin'" with "Lust n' Danger." This shit has some of the negative attitude that you expect from THE NUMBERS or SMOGTOWN. You could possibly switch right from your DEAD BOYS LP to the EDDIE HASKELLS EP. Flip this over and you get FRACAS doing a good mixture of the MISFITS -go-to-Carolina-on-a-Southern-scum-rock holiday. Joe and the boys do an original, "So Sayeth" and then tear into "Fuck All Y'all" by ANTiSEEN. Quite good! Check out these miscreants ASAP. THE EDDIE HASKELLS and FRACAS are often found where humans are consuming copious amounts of alcohol. Rest assured: mistakes will be made!

Scott Carlson, currently of the 70s influenced hard rock outfit, THE SUPERBEES, from Hollywood, California was in one of the truly legendary US metal bands of the 80's: REPULSION. The REPULSION CD *Horrified* has been re-released on Relapse.

Unquestionably one of the fastest bands to emerge from the worldwide metal scene, Flint, Michigan's REPULSION originally formed in 1984 under the name TEMPTER. The line-up consisted of Scott Carlson (vocals), Matt Olivo (guitars) and James Auten (drums). TEMPTER was mainly a cover oriented band playing IRON MAIDEN and GBH material at the same time!

In the summer of 1984, Auten was replaced by Phil Hanes. The name was changed to ULTRAVIOLENCE briefly before settling on GENOCIDE around fall of 1984. At that point, they were essentially influenced musically by HELLHAMMER/CELTIC FROST, DISCHARGE, VOIVOD, CRUCIFIX (SF), VENOM, SLAYER, GBH, SLAUGHTER and lyrically by splatter movies such as "Dawn of the Dead," "Re-Animator" and "Evil Dead," as well as the apocalyptic lyrics growled by Cal of DISCHARGE.

The quartet produced a few originals and by November 1984 they were recording in Hines' basement. A three track rehearsal session featuring "Armies of the Dead," "Crack of Doom" and "Satan's Whores" was released to underground metal fanzines such as Sledgehammer Press and Brain Damage. Soon the demo found its way into the worldwide tape trading network. Trivia fans will note that GENOCIDE had the opportunity to open for SLAYER in Flint, Michigan on their first every US tour that same month.

In October 1985, a six-track rehearsal session titled *Violent Death*, was recorded in Matt's bedroom showing clearly this time that the band had the potential to come up with some intense deathcore material.

At the same time, they started gigging locally, including an opening slot for COC and DRI. In January 1986 the band were preparing to enter WFBE studios to record their first real demo. They asked their longtime friend, Aaron Freeman, to play guitar on that session to fill out the sound. the resulting 12 tracks collectively titled "The Stench of Burning Death" still remains as one of the hottest demos ever to emerge from the underground Metal scene. It introduced new extremes in hardcore Metal combining unrelenting blast beats, spastic, lightning fast guitar work, bulldozing, distorted bass sounds, guttural vocals and extreme gore lyrics. All of this packed into tight, catchy arrangements that rarely exceed the two minute mark.

With Aaron becoming a permanent member, the band resumed gigging locally and tried to attract label interest by shopping around their demo. At this point GENOCIDE was starting to make an indelible mark on the world's tape trading addicts and fanzine writers while receiving nothing but indifference from underground Metal labels. Most record companies viewed the material as too extreme and unmarketable. Time would tell that the Grindcore sound they pioneered was ultimately ahead of its time. The music would prove to be a major influence on the likes of NAPALM DEATH, CARCASS, ENTOMBED and endless other extreme Metal acts.

Since there were several other bands going by the name of GENOCIDE (and the fact that they weren't happy with the name in the first place), the lads changed their name to REPULSION in May 1986.

With the band receiving no label interest, they decided to record a self-produced LP with the financial help of long time friend, Doug Earp. In June, 1986 they entered a small 16 track studio and laid down 18 songs that were intended to make up their debut album *Slaughter of the Innocent*. The entire recording cost $300 USD.

Featuring most of the material from their previous demo plus eight new tunes, the demo/album was again immediately met with praise from fanzines and fans. However, REPULSION's over the top music and lyrics (both now more extreme than ever), found no home with a record label. With no foreseeable future, the band began to lose focus and Dave left in July of 1986.. Frustrated by their lack of success the band broke up after a final gig in September of 1986. Over a year after the breakup, REPULSION were asked by Doug Earp to play a reunion gig for him. It took place with the classic line-up on November 7th, 1987 at the Fallout Shelter, Flint, Michigan and surprisingly another reunion gig took place in the same hall two months later on January 1st, 1988.

As the interest in REPULSION music had become even bigger as time passed, Bill Steer and Jeff Walker from UK's CARCASS decided to release the legendary *Slaughter* demo on their Necrosis label - a subsidiary of Earache Records. The demo, remixed and re-titled *Horrified* for it's vinyl debut, was finally released in June of 1989 - a full three years after it was recorded!

Given new confidence, the band decided to reform and give it another try. the reformation gig took place at the Capital Theater, Flint, Michigan on October 13th, 1990 with Dave, Scott, Aaron and Matt. The show was a great success and more live appearances followed, but as a three piece, while Matt fulfilled a stint in the Army. By January 1991, REPULSION were back in the studio for the first time in four years to record a four track demo featuring brand new material. These songs showed the band opting for a mid-paced approach as opposed to the all -out total speed that characterized the GENOCIDE/REPULSION sound before. A two song single was soon released by Relapse Records featuring "Excruciation" and "Helga (Lost Her Head)" from the demo.

Between the few shows they were playing, the band were writing new material with the hope to see Matt leave the Army and rejoin them, which finally happened in 1992. With Matt back in the ranks, they entered the studio (Matt's bedroom to be exact!) to demo some new material such as "Deranged," "Something Dead" and "Face of Decay" with the hope to record a new album. The band was back to their "total speed" sound, but Scott's interest had decreased a great deal and it signed REPULSION's demise. 1992 saw Relapse release the *Horrified* album in the US with a new layout and a bonus track, "Black Nightmare" taken from the *Stench* 1986 demo. Contact Relapse Records for your copy of "Horrified"—this shit is amazing today, and was years ahead of it's time. (Thanks to Relapse Records for the liner notes)

Riot On Your Own was an excellent Irish punkzine that covered many of the great street punk bands from that area of the world as well as from other locales. As a farewell gesture, *Riot On Your Own* has put out an excellent CDR compilation called *A Riot Down the Lane*. This has great music!! Check out this list of bands, the songs they offered and their hometowns: SPECIAL DUTIES, "I Wish It Could Be 77," Colchester; RUNNIN RIOT, "Kill the Police," Belfast; INTENSIVE CARE, "Blasphemy Ben," London; SABREJETS, "Wild for Kicks," Belfast; ANNALISE, "Signposts & Alleyways," Exeter; DECOY 47, "Vision from Above," Belfast; FOURLETTERWORD, "A Cold Day In Hell," Cardiff; SKINT, "Thief in the Night," Dublin; BARSE 77, "Sisters Making Pornos," Newcastle (England); THE STEAM PIG, "Pilot Husbands Stepford Wives," Dublin; RED EYES, "Wake Up Call;" Glasgow; MR NIPPLES, "Everybody Thinks I'm Paranoid," Belfast; DOGSHIT SANDWICH, "Punkshit," Oldbury; THE DANGERFIELDS, "17 Forever," Belfast; VICIOUS, "Been Out Drinking," Ashmore City (Australia); NORTHERN DRINKING CULT, "Gate Crashers," Adelaide (Australia); BOMBSCARE, "Bullet in the Back," Adelaide (Australia); ON ACTIVE SERVICE, "Pulling On My Boots (Live)," Adelaide (Australia); and RUNNIN RIOT, "Johnny Reggae (Live);" Belfast; Ireland. This is a good compilation!

Ms. Tara West wrote some final words about what *Riot On Your Own* meant to her and the local punk rock community. Read on: "*Riot On Your Own*, the fanzine, is dead. *Riot On Your Own* kept promising to die at the end of every issue only to reappear, clenched joyously between the editor's busted knuckles, only months later. Variously described as Belfast's punk Hello, a pile of self-indulgent old wank and a breath of stale punk air, *Riot On Your Own* was written, typed, printed, photocopied and stapled courtesy of one of Northern Ireland's largest capitalist organizations (unbeknown to them of course). Despite its subversive production and blissfully bad spelling, this was a fanzine which inspired hope.

Slavishly detailing the performances of visiting bands such as GBH, UK SUBS and the DROPKICK MURPHYS, and supporting stalwarts of the local scene, RUNNIN RIOT, MR NIPPLES and DANGLEBERRIE, THE SABREJETS and DECOY 47. Also nurturing the up and coming energy of THE DANGERFIELDS, TEFLON DON, FUCKALLSQUARED, 'UM SEXY RESULTS. *Riot On Your Own* was a dynamic record of Belfast's small but resilient punk scene. It was proof that punk didn't die,. It was an ongoing celebration of a chosen lifestyle. If you want to get philosophical about it, it was a testimony to the longevity of belief.

And now of course, *Riot On Your Own* is gone. I am assured it's definitely floating tits up in metaphorical fanzine history. This compilation is its legacy—the best of the local punk scene and beyond. Enjoy, if you can, the ugly lovechild of Belfast's only capitalist—sponsored journal of anarchism. Thanks to everyone who was involved in any way that *Riot On Your Own* fanzine and all the bands who volunteered material for this compilation. It is comprised of most of my favorite bands and specific songs reviewed over the last three years. Try to continue supporting the whole DIY underground movement and keep believing you can make a difference."

Until next month,

See you fucks at the bar!

"A swimsuit issue?" Arwen grimaced at me in her oft-heard tone which implies "Mike Thorn, you've totally lost your mind—please return to Ohio now and leave us California folk alone." It was an internal struggle around here, but here it is, the first ever and soon to be annual Swimsuit edition of *Maximum Rocknroll*. But why? Simple: sex sells. Imagine how many copies *Punk Planet* must have sold of that "Punk Porn" issue? And do you really think anyone ever purchased the *Probe* for its reviews? Yeah, and my brother reads *Playboy* for the articles. Personally, I think this is a good direction for *MRR* to be going in, and you can look for more of the same in coming months as we add an advice column (start sending in those questions now!), a fashion section, and punk rock astrology! Of course, to make room for these exciting new additions, we will be forced to trim down the news section a bit and also must cut a few columnists. So, it is with a heavy heart that I must announce we are begining the layoffs by firing both Mykel Board and Bill Florio. This will be viewed as a blessing to some of you, who are tired of their obxonious New Yorker sense of humor, while some of you will probably view this as the worst mistake that we've ever made—thinking them two of the finer writers the punk world has ever produced.

On our end, we're sad to be letting them go, but to be frank, things are changing at a quick pace around here. While some view them as institutions at *MRR*, to Arwen and myself, Mykel and Bill represent the *old MRR*. We want to be proactive and ahead of the trend curve—so it's out with ancient columnists and in with reviewing Electroclash records. Out with punk record reviews and in with fashion photo spreads. No more scene reports from far-away countries, just tips on the proper etiquette for wearing multiple studded belts. It's going to be great, I promise. No… really.

Endnotes:

1) From this point on please send all nude photos of yourself which would normally go to Mykel, care of me to the *MRR* PO Box. Does anyone mail anything to Florio? I'm guessing not, but just in case, send that to the PO Box too, care of Floyd.

2) Ask Justin from CRUCIAL UNIT about the one-two punch of Ethiopean food and chocolate cake. Also please ask him what sort of asshole eats fruit at a buffet.

3) I write this in February, it comes out in mid-March, yet the cover says April. Confused? Perhaps in more ways than one.

4) As usual please contact me via the *MRR* PO Box or by using mikethorn@maximumrocknroll.com

Board & the Lord

Well, Mike Thorn opted for diplomacy, for once. His column this month neatly sidesteps the *real* reason Mykel Board won't be writing for *MRR* anymore. I don't blame him for being evasive. Believe me, it's with a heavy heart that I'll relate the whole story.

A few weeks back we talked on the phone, just like Mykel's column says we did. But he was the one who made the call. He sounded different than usual...I don't know, almost...dreamy...

After a few minutes of ho-humming, he burst out with it.

"Oh *Arwen*," he gushed like an Avon lady from Manhattan. "I finally met someone! I just had to call *somebody*!"

"You did! Is it a *he*?" I asked.

"It's a *Him*, actually," he replied. "And he's wonderful."

I started to feel a little funny. I'd never heard Mykel talk about a conquest like this before. This outburst of giddiness sounded bizarre filtered through his thick shrug of an accent.

"He's so loving and all-powerful," he continued. "I'll never caress another smooth young ass as long as I live. Or afterwards."

"Jesus *Christ*, Mykel, you sound like a fucking convert," I said, unable to hide my embarrassment.

His voice got serious. "And that, my misguided young friend, is what they mean by *in vain*," he said curtly, and hung up.

I stared at the receiver in disbelief. Not Mykel, surely! He was so shocking, so cutting edge! His columns regularly shook my fragile lefty politics to the very core. This was unthinkable. I hit redial.

"Mykel, I know you like them well-hung," I said, but this is ridiculous. You, of all people, born again?"

"I know it's hard for you to understand," he replied, a little defensive, "but I've grown tired of hunting after sex just to have something to write about. I've found a deeper connection with Jesus. I guess in the end, all I wanted was a guy with a big doctrine."

"Well, he does have a pretty good-sized schtick," I said, "but Mykel, you need to think of your *own* big schtick. I mean, you're a free thinker, and a Jew, for Christ's sake..."

"Arwen," he said, solemn again, "I can't keep talking to you if you keep taking his name in vain."

"Sorry...Jesus, I'm sorry..." But it was too late. He hung up again, and we hung up his *MRR* preaching rights soon after. We split ways by mutual agreement, actually, quite amicably. Because the deadline for this issue was coming up, I even slipped in one last favor.

"The least you can do is go out with a bang," I urged. "For your last column, how about writing something so monumentally shocking, so completely *over the top*, that the kids will talk about it for years to come. Slaughter our sacred cows and serve them to us as a nice paté. Dismantle the ideological prison of political correctness brick by brick, and then drop the bricks on sensitive types from third story windows. Do what you do best, Mykel, one last time."

And that, my friends, is what he did. Read it and weep. I know I did.

Personal Space

Here's something that happens to me a lot. I'm in a crowded room, say, at a punk show. I'm standing back from the bands, just past all the mosh, or more towards the back, where you can see more. I'm by myself, or with someone else, or in a little clump of people.

People need to move around; those in the pit need fresh air, warm beer, a chance to stand back and appreciate the pit from afar. Those not in the pit need to get the pit, or closer to the stage, or whatever. There's a flow of traffic.

I've noticed that the space I've chosen to stand in will often become a sort of a gate in and out of the action. Dudes will put a hand on my shoulder and another on my back, physically moving me aside. Sometimes they'll mutter "excuse me," which might make it OK, except that they don't make eye contact. They stare over my head at their destination while their hands move me out of the way, much like a piece of furniture that's too much trouble to walk around.

I've done a couple of experiments, to make sure that it wasn't just that I'd always stand at the most convenient spot for traffic. But no, not so. It's gotten to where I can see the dudes (and girls, often enough) approaching, and I know they'll weave right around to me. I figured it out, finally: they're scoping out the path of least resistance. Guess who?

I mean, I'm a punk rocker. I have funny hair and wear spikey bracelets. I grew up in the city; I know how to look at people on the street so that most of the time they won't fuck with me. When to make eye contact that lets people know both how alert you are and little they would get from you. When, in more volatile situations, to avoid eye contact completely. But I'm also a girl, and five-foot-two. I look smaller than I feel. And in a dark club, I can't rely on eye contact and body language.

Don't get me wrong: I'm not talking about the friendly, intimate physical chaos of the pit, where we all put our bodies out in shared space for touching and shoving. And I'm not talking about a little compromise: it's instinctive and fair for people to give a little, when they pass on a crowded street or in another tight spot. It wasn't until I realized I was supposed to give *all* the time that I started to get annoyed about it. Now I just stop moving aside, after the second or third gentle push on the shoulder. I don't push back; I just make myself solid, hold my ground. It's amusing to watch the confusion this creates.

Girls almost always find another way through, without comment. Dudes either push harder, finally having to either *really* push me—which is not the point—or give up, which most men are opposed to on principle. Sometimes they lean down and give me an exaggerated, condescending "excuse me"—as if it were an act of insolence on my part to demand that someone address me personally when they put their hands on me.

This resistance may sound childish, but I think it actually works to a productive end. It has the effect of forcing men to confront me, to realize that by shoving or touching someone, they have potentially initiated an antagonistic relationship, no matter how harmless that person appears. And hopefully to realize what every genuinely tough person knows: what makes a person dangerous isn't a matter of size; it's a matter of anger, of confidence, and of how much (or how little) they have to lose.

In With the Old World, Out With the New

The UN Security Council meetings in February were something else. France and Germany's messages to the world , in particular, reached back to Enlightenment, to the "modern" values of diplomacy and rational thought. They carried the sentiment that the Council was the guardian of the free world: our safety and our integrity. The words rang strangely in my ears, which are so accustomed to the Bush administration's boyishly secretive, bullying rhetoric. Their loftiness affected me, almost against my will.

I believe there is some truth to the idea that Germany has assimilated pacifism into its collective consciousness at a profound level. I'm not informed enough about France's economic interests in the Middle East to speculate about its other motives, but certainly they are there. Nonetheless, I couldn't help but feel that the effect of the Council meetings was to shift the moral certitude away from the US. Dare we hope for a real resistance from these countries? And if so, how does Bush expect to successfully disengage Americans from their cultural ties with France and Germany? I mean, it's one thing to demonize far-away people of color, with funny ways and customs that only a tiny minority here share, but this "Old Europe" has its clutches deep in our mainstream consciousness. I'm on the edge of my seat, hoping they stand their ground.

•••

My belated but sincere thanks to Mike Thorn and Clara for holding the ship together during my family leave during the production of issue #238, my 50th issue of *MRR*. Also love and gratitude to Gina, Aaron, and Paul, for holding *me* together, Aaron for last-minute copyediting help, Kat, Jake, Laura, Sara, Brad, and everyone else who showed their support in hard times.

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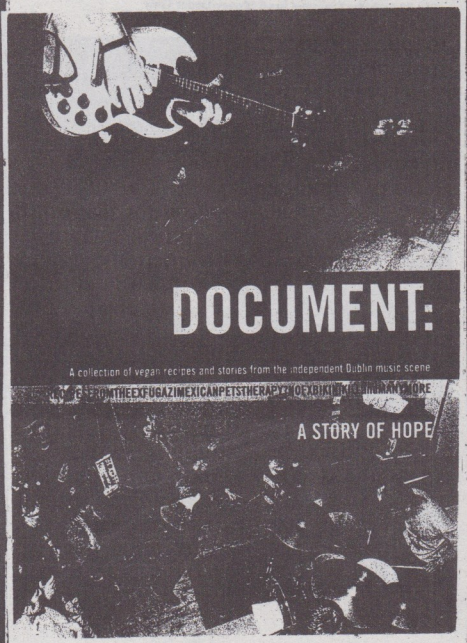

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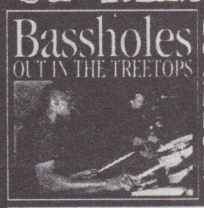

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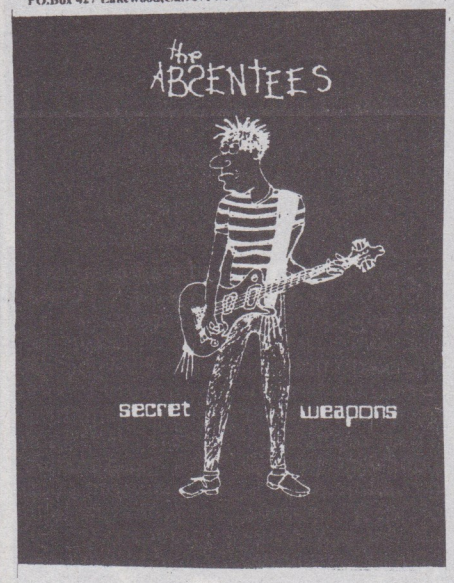

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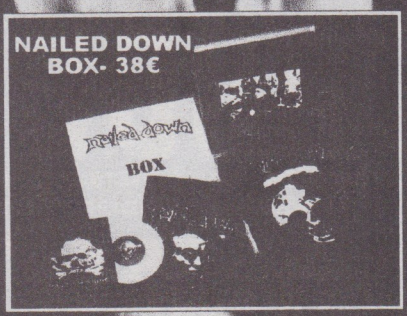

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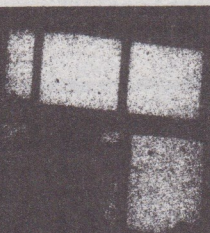

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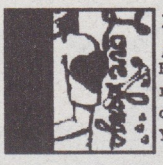

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MRR NEWS

No. 239
April 2003
compiled by:
Arwen Curry

IS THE RIGHT TO MARCH A SECURITY ISSUE?

Published by the Long Island, NY Newsday
by Bruce Ackerman

This is a dark time for constitutional liberty, but the fate of Saturday's peace demonstration in New York deserves a footnote in tomorrow's history books. The demonstrators proposed a march past the United Nations to Central Park to support the role of the UN inspectors in Iraq and to denounce the prospect of unilateral warfare. But Mayor Michael Bloomberg, citing security concerns, said no.

The most the mayor would allow was a rally at the plaza in front of the UN for 10,000 participants. The overflow was herded into "pens" that the police constructed for miles down the center of First Avenue. Once a demonstrator entered his assigned pen, he wasn't allowed to fraternize with people in other pens. While others marched with dignity throughout the world, hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers were kept behind barricades.

This policy was nothing new. The Bloomberg administration has banned all protest marches in Manhattan since September 2002. Nevertheless, the federal courts upheld the city, enabling it to maintain its hardline position.

For all his sound and fury during eight years in office, former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani never imposed such a sweeping prohibition. Suddenly, the only people who can march are innocuous folk, engaged in ethnic celebration. The city has granted a permit for 120,000 marchers to strut their stuff at the St. Patrick's Day parade. Only the UN protesters and their ilk are left to freeze in their pens.

As someone who made his fortune creating a media company, Bloomberg certainly knows that the First Amendment doesn't protect only marchers on St. Patrick's Day. The Constitution is especially concerned with the threat of political suppression. During the 1960s, federal judges were tireless in striking down the countless pretexts used by Southern cities to suppress civil rights marches against segregation.

But the federal courts failed to rise to the occasion this time around. When the march organizers went to court, federal judges rubber-stamped the pretexts advanced by the Bloomberg administration. The city emphasized that the St. Patrick's Day organizers work with the police in advance to assure against security risks. In contrast, the peace organizers could not say for sure how large their parade would be. Given this uncertainty, the courts upheld the city's decision to ban the march as a reasonable safeguard against violence.

Of course, political protesters never can control the timing of national crises—and yet their right to march has been a central part of the First Amendment tradition. The city offered no evidence of any clear and present danger to public safety, and the Saturday demonstration occurred without significant incident. If the bare risk of disorder suffices for suppression, we have come to the end of the road.

Hoping to narrow the sweeping force of her opinion last week, U.S. District Court Judge Barbara Jones pointed to the fact that "the nation and the city are currently at the second highest security alert." This makes the decision worse, not better. We are only at the beginning of an endless war against terrorism. Are fundamental political rights to be contingent on FBI decisions to change the alert from yellow to orange? Such a power can be blatantly abused for partisan ends. Nevertheless, the court of appeals affirmed Jones' decision, and time ran out before the full U.S. Supreme Court could give serious consideration to the matter. So the marchers were kept in their pens, creating a precedent that will haunt us in the future.

This is not the first time the lower courts have crumpled in the defense of civil liberties after Sept. 11. Most notoriously, they have upheld the president's power to detain U.S. citizens indefinitely without trial by declaring them "enemy combatants." As these precedents mount, it is time for all of us to reconsider the grim constitutional order we are so hastily creating.

Perhaps it is a good thing that the Supreme Court hasn't allowed itself to enter the fray too quickly. A pause will allow it to appreciate the high stakes involved. But in the meantime, events in New York should caution us about the frightening ease with which our most precious liberties can disappear.

Bruce Ackerman, professor of law and political science at Yale, is author of "We the People."

SAN FRANCISCO: COPS LOSE TEMPER, CROWD FIGHTS BACK

Following the main march in San Francisco on 2/16, approximately two thousand people joined an unpermitted breakaway march. The march started at Civic Center and headed downtown. The crowd was blocked from entering Union Square and one person was arrested in a confrontation in front of the Crate and Barrel. The crowd then moved towards Powell St and several people climbed on top of a cable car with their signs. While over six people had climbed onto the car, the only one arrested (minutes after climbing down) was the sole African American in the group who had been on the car. The crowd then moved towards the San Francisco Shopping Center where a window was broken at Abercrombie and Fitch. As the crowd moved back up Market St another window was broken at Old Navy but there were no arrests.

As the march was returning to Civic Center, it got boxed in by police near 8th and Market. As the crowd chanted to be let go, the police lost control of their horses. The horses reared and jumped into sections of the crowd. Angry protesters attacked by the horses started throwing things and the police line collapsed with protesters moving back as a group to 8th and Market. At 8th and Market the police arrested perhaps one or two people for minor charges and the crowd tried to block the police cars from leaving and a police car window was broken. The police then charged, swinging batons and hitting (and kicking) everyone in sight.

Eventually the number of protesters decreased, the police took the intersection and the protesters got back on the sidewalk. Due to the location most of the crowd was now composed of people leaving the main march rather than the original breakaway protest. Around 7 PM the police stopped blocking the intersection, the crowd moved in and a few minutes later several hundred police moved back to retake the intersection. There was no conflict and most people moved back to the sidewalk but a small group of people (perhaps forty protesters) was surrounded in the middle of the intersection. The small group sat and locked arms and after the police used various pain techniques the small group of peaceful protesters were put in several police cars and a bus.

The US: A Nation Divided, With No Bridges Left to Build

Published by the Independent/UK
by Robert Fisk

The show was over, recorded for one of those nice liberal local American TV cable channels—this time in Texas—where everyone agrees that war is wrong, that George Bush is in the hands of right-wing Christian fundamentalists and pro-Israeli neo- conservatives.

Don Darling, the TV host, had just turned to thank me for my long and flu-laden contribution. Then it happened. Cameraman number two came striding towards us through the studio lights. "I want to thank you, sir, for reminding us that the British had a lot to do with the chaos in the Middle East, " he said. "But I have something else to say."

His voice rose 10 decibels, his bare arms bouncing up and down at his sides, his shaven head struck forward pugnaciously. "Yeah, I wanna tell you that the cause of this problem is the fucking medieval Arabs and their wish to enslave us all—and I tell you that it is because we want to save the Jews from the fucking savage Arabs who want to throw them into the sea that we are about to fuck Saddam." There was a pause as Don Darling looked at the man, aghast. "And that," cameraman number two concluded, "is the fucking truth."

Darling called to the studio manager. "Where does this man come from?" he demanded to know. The lady from the University of Texas—organizer of this gentle little pow-wow—advanced on to the studio floor in horror: "Who is this person?" I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. All of a sudden, our nice anti-war chat had been brought to a halt by a spot of redneck reality. There really were right-wingers out there in the darkness who really did want George Bush to zap the Arabs. I asked the guy his name: "Gregg Aykins," he said. "And the FBI can do nothing to me if you give them my name."

It was a telling moment, a symbol of the vast gulf of reason between the pro- and anti-war movement in America. They don't talk to each other. And if they do, neither comprehends the other. Like the endless chat programs on Pacifica Radio and all the smaller liberal talk shows from Boston to LA that serve up inedible dollops of anti-Bush, anti-Republican rant, there is simply no contact between the intellectual "elite" of the left and the less privileged Americans who work with their hands and join the military to gain a free education and end up fighting America's foreign wars.

At a seminar at the University of North Carolina, I listened to a group of professors and senior lecturers and "activists" debating how to influence the "path to war." "What we've got to do is to reach out to mainstream press and bridge-build to other activists," a lady with long gray hair announced, reading a list of proposals—all couched in the language of academic discourse that ensures her message is incomprehensible outside academia—which she wished to discuss.

Quite apart from the irredeemable nature of the "mainstream" press—The New York Times, The Washington Post and the rest are far too busy carrying more Iraqi horror stories from "intelligence sources" than reporting the American anti-war movement—the lady's desire to "bridge-build" with fellow "activists" was all too familiar a theme.

The people with whom these liberal academics should be building bridges are the truck-drivers and bell-hops and Amtrak crews, the poor blacks and the cops whose families provide the cannon fodder for America's overseas military adventures. But that, of course, would force intellectuals to emerge from the sheltered, tenured world of seminars and sit-ins and deal directly with those whose opinions they wish to change.

When I made this very point at Harvard and several other universities, I was told, rather patronizingly, that these people—the phrase was almost identical—had "so little information" or are "not very informed." This is, in fact, untrue. I have heard as much sense about the Middle East from a train crew en route from Washington to Georgia and from a waiter in a St Louis diner as I have from the good folks of North Carolina.

Black Americans, for example, are uninhibited in their sympathy for Palestinians under occupation. But when I told a lecturer in Austin that I had asked hotel staff and air crews to turn up to my lectures on the Middle East and America—and that all had come—I was treated with a kind of weird amazement, puzzlement that I should bother to ask such unpromising material to think about the Arab-Israel conflict mixed with faint pity that I should ever expect them to understand.

Sometimes I rather suspect that the anti-war left in America likes being in a permanent minority. I mean no disrespect to the Noam Chomskys and Daniel Ellsbergs and Dennis Bernsteins; they fight, amid abuse and threats, to make their voices heard. Yet I have an uneasy feeling that many on the intellectual left are fearful that America will lose its next war amid massive casualties—but are even more fearful that America may win with minimal casualties.

Perhaps this is unfair. But as long as America's anti-war movement talks to itself rather than to others, it is going to go on being surprised when the Gregg Aykinses emerge from the darkness with their hatred and venom intact to support George Bush's forthcoming war in Iraq.

YOU FLY, THEY SPY

from Mondo Washington by James Ridgeway

While Congress voted last week to curb the Pentagon's efforts to set up a broad electronic spy program, there is an equally bad project within the Department of Transportation that would officially label every person who rides a commercial airliner as a potential terrorist and a threat to national security. By doing this, the department can gather all sorts of information and conduct background investigations of airline passengers that otherwise would require court orders. This program is tucked away in what the DOT euphemistically calls the Privacy Act System of Records, Christopher Effgen reports on his Disaster Center Web site. "DOT," Effgen writes, "is proposing that passengers' names be entered into a computer program that will then match their name against names in law enforcement systems of records, financial and transactional databases, public source information, proprietary data, and be used to create risk assessment reports. When a person is identified as being a possible suspect, in violation of any federal, state, territorial, tribal, local, international, or foreign law, the information will be forwarded to the appropriate law enforcement agency. These agencies may also access the database." All of this is being done as part of the department's "risk assessment" for spotting would-be terrorists getting on planes.

The database has other uses, of course, as a tool in deciding whether to hire or fire someone, issue a security clearance, make a grant, give a license. The applicants will never know they are being scrutinized through this secret system

GRAFFITI SPACE TRAP TESTED

LOS ANGELES (Reuters)—Satellites and super-sensitive sensors are now tuned to the sibilant hiss of spray cans in a space-age effort to eradicate one of the oldest and most persistent urban problems—graffiti.

TaggerTrap, a graffiti eradication system being tested in several California cities, uses global positioning system technology, cell phones and sensors that recognize the ultrasonic pitch of spray cans to alert police when vandals begin their work, representatives said.

"The tagger, when he pushes down on that spray can, he's calling police," said George Lerg, co-founder of TrapTec, the Escondido, California-based company that developed TaggerTrap.

The unique, ultrasonic tone emitted by aerosol paint cans trips the sensors, which signal a transmitter linked to a police cell phone or radio. The global positioning system pinpoints the location of the transmitter, Lerg said.

The portable sensors have a range of 100 feet in any direction.

GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN PRISONS

The East African Standard (Nairobi)
Eliud Miring'uh, Nairobi

The Government has pledged to tackle issues of serious human rights abuses in prisons, including torture of inmates.

The Minister for Home Affairs and National Heritage, Moody Awori, expressed shock on learning that female inmates have been impregnated by Prison officers, while other inmates were tortured and killed.

Awori was speaking at his Jogoo House office when he received members of the Standing Committee on Human Rights led by their chairman, Prof Onesmus Mutungi.

Mutungi later presented the minister with a report his committee compiled last year, detailing horrific details about the state of Prisons in Kenya.

The report touches on torture of inmates, inhuman living conditions for both inmates and prison warders, poor health services, grabbing of prison land and congestion.

Mutungi revealed gory details of prisoners who were tortured to death by warders and cited the case of King'ong'o prison in Nyeri two years ago.

He also cited several deaths of inmates in Shimo la Tewa and Kodiaga Prisons occasioned by poor living conditions, congestion, and lack of health services.

Mutungi also exposed cases of female inmates who had been raped and impregnated by prison officers in Lang'ata women barracks, Embu, and Kakamega Prisons.

The report touches on poor living conditions for warders, and cites Kamiti Maximum Security Prison where warders live in small rooms covered with polythene paper.

Said Mutungi: "You cannot expect prison warders to rehabilitate inmates when they themselves live in worse conditions than the prisoners."

Commenting on the minister's recent tour of Lang'ata women barracks, Mutungi told Awori he is yet to see the worst.

Touching on congestion, Mutungi said the current capacity for Prisons was 14,000 inmates against 40,000 inmates who are spread across the country.

"All the resources in Prisons are over-stretched including food, medical care, housing, and other amenities," said Mutungi.

He complained that over 60 per cent of the prison population comprised remandees because they can't raise stiff bonds imposed by courts, or in cases where those arrested could not appear before court for lack of transport.

The report complained against grabbing of Prison land, and cited Lang'ata women barracks, Kitale, and Shimo la Tewa where influential personalities and senior Prison staff had grabbed large chunks of land and other properties.

Commenting on the report, Awori said the Government will change the name "Prison" in favor of "Reformatory Centres" in order to change their image.

FULL U.S. CONTROL PLANNED FOR IRAQ

by Karen DeYoung and Peter Slevin

The Bush administration plans to take complete, unilateral control of a post-Saddam Hussein Iraq, with an interim administration headed by a yet-to-be named American civilian who would direct the reconstruction of the country and the creation of a "representative" Iraqi government, according to a now-finalized blueprint described by U.S. officials and other sources.

Gen. Tommy Franks, the head of the U.S. Central Command, is to maintain military control as long as U.S. troops are there. Once security was established and weapons of mass destruction were located and disabled, a U.S. administrator would run the civilian government and direct reconstruction and humanitarian aid.

In the early days of military action, U.S. forces following behind those in combat would distribute food and other relief items and begin needed reconstruction. The goal, officials said, would be to make sure the Iraqi people "immediately" consider themselves better off than they were the day before war, and attribute their improved circumstances directly to the United States.

The initial humanitarian effort, as previously announced, is to be directed by retired Army Lt. Gen. Jay M. Garner. But once he got to Baghdad, sources said, Garner would quickly be replaced as the supreme civil authority by an American "of stature," such as a former U.S. state governor or ambassador, officials said.

Officials said other governments are being recruited to participate in relief and reconstruction tasks under U.S. supervision at a time to be decided by Franks and officials in Washington. Although initial food supplies are to be provided by the United States, negotiations are underway with the U.N. World Food Program to administer a nationwide distribution network Opposition leaders were informed this week that the United States will not recognize an Iraqi provisional government being discussed by some expatriate groups. Some 20 to 25 Iraqis would assist U.S. authorities in a U.S.-appointed "consultative council," with no governing responsibility. Under a decision finalized last week, Iraqi government officials would be subjected to "de-Baathification," a reference to Hussein's ruling Baath Party, under a program that borrows from the "de-Nazification" program established in Germany after World War II.

Criteria by which officials would be designated as too tainted to keep their jobs are still being worked on, although they would likely be based more on complicity with the human rights and weapons abuses of the Hussein government than corruption, officials said. A large number of current officials would be retained.

Although some of the broad strokes of U.S. plans for a post-Hussein Iraq have previously been reported, newly finalized elements include the extent of U.S. control and the plan to appoint a nonmilitary civil administrator. Officials cautioned that developments in Iraq could lead them to revise the plan on the run. Yet to be decided is "at what point and for what purpose" a multinational administration, perhaps run by the United Nations, would be considered to replace the U.S. civil authority.

"We have a load of plans that could be carried out by an international group, a coalition group, or by us and a few others," one senior U.S. official. President Bush, the official said, doesn't want to close options until the participants in a military action are known and the actual postwar situation in Iraq becomes clear.

The administration has been under strong pressure to demonstrate that it has a detailed program to deal with what is expected to be a chaotic and dangerous situation if Hussein is removed. The White House plans to brief Congress and reporters on more details of the plan next week.

No definitive price tag or time limit has been put on the plan, and officials stressed that much remains unknown about the length of a potential conflict, how much destruction would result, and "how deep" the corruption of the Iraqi government goes. The administration has declined to estimate how long U.S. forces would remain in Iraq. Undersecretary of State Marc Grossman told Congress last week that it might be two years before the Iraqis regained administrative control of their country. But "they're terrified of being caught in a time frame," said retired Army Gen. Barry R. McCaffrey, one of a number of senior military and civilian experts who have been briefed by the Pentagon on the plan. "My own view is that it will take five years, with substantial military power, to establish and exploit the peace" in Iraq.

Although more than 180,000 U.S. troops are on the ground in the Persian Gulf region, U.S. officials continued to emphasize that President Bush still has not made a final decision on whether to go to war. Negotiations at the United Nations, where Bush is seeking a new Security Council resolution declaring that Hussein has violated U.N. disarmament demands and authorizing that he be disarmed by a U.N. multinational force, are at a delicate stage.

A majority of the council's 15 members have said they believe a decision on war should be delayed while U.N. weapons inspections, launched in November, continue. Bush has said that, if necessary, the U.S. military and a "coalition of the willing" will disarm Iraq without U.N. approval.

The administration also is continuing discussions with Arab governments about the possibilities of exile for Hussein and several dozen of his family members and top officials. Sources said, however, that even if Hussein and a small group of others were to leave, uncertainties about who would remain in charge, the need to destroy weapons of mass destruction, and concerns about establishing long-term stability would likely lead to the insertion of U.S. troops there in any case.

Among the other parts of the post-Hussein plan:

• Iraqi military forces would be gathered in prisoner-of-war camps, with opposition members now receiving U.S. training at an air base in Hungary serving as part of the guard force. The Iraqi troops would be vetted by U.S. forces under Franks's command, and those who were cleared, beginning with those who "stood down or switched sides" during a U.S. assault, would receive U.S. training to serve in what one official called a "post-stabilization" force.

U.S. forces would secure any weapons of mass destruction that were found, including biological and chemical weapons stores. "At an appropriate time," an official said, the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency, who are conducting U.N.-mandated weapons inspections in Iraq, might be brought in to examine weaponry, scientists and documentation.

In addition to the consultative council, an Iraqi commission would be formed to reestablish a judicial system. An additional commission would write a new constitution, although officials emphasized that they would not expect to "democratize" Iraq along the lines of the U.S. governing system. Instead, they speak of a "representative Iraqi government."

Officials said the decision to install U.S. military and civilian administrations for an indeterminate time stems from lessons learned in Afghanistan, where power has been diffused among U.S. military forces still waging war against the remnants of the Taliban and al Qaeda, a multinational security force of several thousand troops in which the United States does not participate, and the interim government of Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

The administration is particularly keen on averting interference by other regional powers, and cites the "ability of people like the Iranians and others to go in with money and create warlords" sympathetic to their own interests, one official said. "We don't want a weak federal government that plays into the hands of regional powers" and allows Iraq to be divided into de facto spheres of influence. "We don't want the Iranians to be paying the Shiites, the Turks the Turkmen and the Saudis the Sunnis," the official, referring to some of the main groups among dozens of Iraqi tribes and ethnic and religious groups.

A similar anxiety led to the decision to prohibit the Iraqi opposition based outside the country from forming a provisional government. The chief proponent of that idea, Ahmed Chalabi, head of the Iraqi National Congress, was informed this week that any move to declare a provisional Iraqi government "would result in a formal break in the U.S.-INC relationship," the official said.

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A NEW DEBATE OVER SAFETY IN SUCKING: THE STATE OF ORAL SEX

by Duncan Osborne

How safe is oral sex? That question has been on the tip of many tongues ever since AIDS raised its deadly head. Now one expert says that fellatio may not be risky at all, at least when it comes to spreading HIV.

Dr. Jeffrey Klausner, who heads the sexually transmitted disease prevention effort at the San Francisco Department of Public Health, bases his conclusion on a new study of 239 gay or bisexual men who reported no anal or vaginal sex and no injection-drug use in the prior six months. Ninety-eight percent said they had given head without condoms. Twenty-eight percent said they knew their partner was HIV-positive, and of those, 39 percent said they had swallowed semen. None of the men became infected.

The risk of HIV transmission via oral sex, Klausner maintains, "is very, very, very, very, very low and may be zero."

A 2002 Spanish study supports Klausner's view. Researchers there followed 110 women and 25 men, all HIV-negative, for 10 years. Each participant had an HIV-positive partner. The investigators estimated that over the course of the study, the couples engaged in 19,000 acts of unprotected fellatio or cunnilingus. None of the negative partners converted.

A 1998 Emory University study analyzed 24 epidemiological investigations of HIV transmission via oral sex among heterosexuals or gay men. Generally, oral sex was not found to be a risk factor, though five of those studies concluded that among some gay men and crack users, sucking did transmit HIV.

"Yes, it does occur," says Richard Rothenberg, a professor at Emory University's School of Medicine. "It's probably a relatively small contribution to the epidemiology of HIV transmission."

Still, no piece of good news goes undebated.

Klausner's comments set off Rex Wockner, a journalist whose syndicated news stories and commentaries have appeared in the gay press for 18 years. "I know four people who I believe when they tell me that they seroconverted from sucking," Wockner told the Voice. Of those four friends, Wockner notes, one is now dead.

"It's great news that guys in San Francisco are out there sucking dick and they are all still negative," Wockner says. "The unfortunate thing about this study is that nobody asked them how many times they did that. Doing it only once and staying negative doesn't prove a thing." Kimberly Page-Shafer, the San Francisco study's lead author, did not return phone calls from the Voice.

There is disagreement even within the San Francisco health department. "I certainly agree that the risk from oral sex is very low," says director Mitchell H. Katz. "The part of the message I don't think is beneficial is the part that says 'and may be zero.' I myself would not have oral sex with someone who was positive or of an unknown status." Katz says he tells people they have a 1-in-2500 chance of getting HIV from unprotected oral sex with ejaculation.

A 2000 study from the University of California San Francisco, San Francisco General Hospital, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention tends to support Katz. Investigators interviewed 102 HIV-positive men, and eight of them reported that unprotected oral sex was their only risky activity.

The Emory University study included case reports, dating from 1984 to 1993, documenting HIV transmission within lesbian couples that practiced oral sex. But a 1994 study that followed 18 lesbian couples in which one partner was HIV-positive concluded that the risk of transmission was "nonexistent."

Few studies have investigated heterosexual women and HIV transmission via oral sex. The issue is far from academic, since heterosexual transmission accounted for 15 percent of AIDS cases diagnosed in New York State in 1999, the latest year for which complete data is available. Of the more than 41,000 AIDS cases in the state to date, nearly 13,000 are attributed to heterosexual transmission and more than a third of these were diagnosed between 1996 and 1999. Women are twice as likely as men to make up these heterosexual cases. Yet neither the city nor the state have studied the method of sexual transmission among heterosexuals or gay men.

••••

Most AIDS groups agree that oral sex is a low-risk activity, but some, such as Gay Men's Health Crisis, betray a certain agnosticism. GMHC's 1996 pamphlet on oral sex is titled "To Suck or Not to Suck." It explores the pros and cons of fellatio and tells readers, "Only You Can Decide What You Put in Your Mouth." In the pamphlet, GMHC rates oral sex "low risk." In Canada, health officials describe the risk from fellatio as "negligible."

That may be, but it is indisputable that oral sex can transmit syphilis, gonorrhea, herpes, warts, and other diseases. (The city's health department recently noted a 50 percent increase in syphilis cases, mostly among gay men.) However, when it comes to HIV, researchers have two different missions. One is to document risky behavior for individuals; the other is to establish which practices could change the course of a deadly epidemic. Some researchers argue that if gay men adopted fellatio as their sole sexual behavior, the AIDS epidemic in that population would disappear.

But here, too, there is disagreement. Jim Koopman, a professor of epidemiology at the University of Michigan and a highly regarded AIDS researcher, takes the risk of HIV transmission through oral sex among gay men seriously. He thinks the statistics used to bolster the claim that sucking is safe are faulty. "A standard analysis will not show the effects of oral sex," Koopman says. That's because, if an infected person is having both anal and oral sex, most researchers assume that anal sex is the source of the infection. Therefore, the effect of fellatio is masked.

"Oral sex plays a key role," Koopman argues. "My feeling is if we are going to control HIV, we're going to have to take some actions along the line of stopping transmission from oral sex."

US TROOPS 'TO FIGHT' IN PHILIPPINES

US troops were first deployed in 2002

Special forces soldiers—supported if needed by marines—will be used in an offensive against the rebel Islamic group Abu Sayyaf on the southern island of Jolo, the officials said.

Washington says the troops will be under Philippine command but will be allowed to fight.

The issue is sensitive in the Philippines, a former US colony, whose constitution bans foreign troops from fighting on its soil.

Philippine officials played down the reports, describing it merely as an extension of an existing program under which US forces train their Philippine counterparts.

The BBC's correspondent at the US defense department, Nick Childs, says the operation is a significant escalation in US military co-operation with the Philippines.

The deployment will include about 350 special forces soldiers and 400 support personnel on the ground with 1,000 marines stationed offshore who could be called in at short notice.

The operation could start as early as next month on Jolo, which is a stronghold of Abu Sayyaf—a group denounced by the US as a terrorist organization with past links to al-Qaeda.

Conflicting views

A US defense official said of the deployment: "This is different. This is an actual combined operation, and it is US forces accompanying and actively participating in Philippines-led offensive operations."

But a spokesman for Philippine President Gloria Arroyo insisted the program was merely the latest part of the program under which US troops have been giving advice on anti-terror tactics.

Ignacio Bunye said the role of the US forces was still being worked out, but a constitutional ban on foreign troops fighting on Philippines soil was still in force.

He said the operation would be similar to that conducted on Basilan last year against Abu Sayyaf, which is believed to have about 500 members.

Then US troops accompanied local soldiers in missions against the rebels, who are best known for their kidnapping-for-ransom operations, but who also want Muslim autonomy in the south of the overwhelmingly Catholic country.

"In other words, no combat troops. Everything will be for training and advice," Mr Bunye said.

The US put a $5m bounty on the heads of Abu Sayyaf's leaders for the murder of two Americans in a hostage crisis that ended last year.

Power out

On Friday, there was fresh violence in the south of the Philippines when two small explosions outside a crowded shopping mall injured at least three people.

The blasts hit a mall in Koranadal city in South Cotabato province.

A power line was also bombed on the island of Mindanao.

An army spokesman said he believed the attack was the work of another Muslim rebel group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

On Thursday, at least 16 people were killed in two attacks blamed on the MILF.

CONSERVATIONISTS WARN OF BUSH BUDGET TRICKS

By J.R. Pegg

WASHINGTON, DC (ENS)—Conservationists are warning that the Bush administration's new budget proposal is littered with broken promises, and dramatically under-funds the agencies responsible for managing the nation's public lands and natural resources. Environmental groups said today they believe the administration's rhetoric of increased spending for the national park system, for land conservation efforts and protection of the nation's forests, oceans and wildlife, is disingenuous and does not match the budget's reality.

Analysis of the budget trends "reveals the hidden anti-environmental agenda of this administration," said Wesley Warren, National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) senior fellow for environmental economics.

The administration's budget presentations focused on comparison to its 2003 requests rather than the 2002 appropriated levels, Warren explained, in order to disguise the size of its spending cuts.

President George W. Bush has concluded that no more than a four percent increase can be justified for the entire federal budget. Yet the overall budget for the environment, according to the NRDC, is down $1.6 billion or six percent, compared to the money appropriated in 2002.

When inflation is factored in, the decrease in environmental spending jumps to $2.2 billion.

Critics point to the administration's presentation of its funding for the Interior Department's Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) as a specific example of how it is misrepresenting spending levels.

Interior Secretary Gail Norton promoted the Bush administration's claim that the new budget will fully fund the $900 million LWCF, a trust fund that takes revenues from oil and gas drilling in the Outer Continental Shelf to pay for land acquisition to protect land and water resources. But the $900 million figure for LWCF includes funding for some 15 unrelated programs and their budgets, masking a 50 percent cut in real funds available to LWCF.

"Fully funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund was one of the precious few environmental promises by the Bush campaign, and they can't even seem to keep that one," said Defenders of Wildlife president Rodger Schlickeisen. "It's become a sad routine for this administration to go out of its way to undermine wildlife and environmental protection, so it's unsurprising that their budget springs from the same mold."

No New Money for Parks

During his campaign, Bush also pledged to eliminate the $4.9 billion maintenance backlog at the national parks by 2006. The president's proposed budget for the National Park Service (NPS) is $2.4 billion, up $8.3 million from the 2003 request. But NPS funding for land acquisition and state assistance is down $47.4 million.

Conservationists argue that the NPS is still in desperate need of increased operating funds and money to reduce its maintenance backlog. On average, U.S. national parks are operating with only two-thirds of the needed funding, according to the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA).

Since he took office, Bush has only proposed an additional $366 million for maintenance, according to Blake Selzer, legislative analyst for NPCA.

"The administration is walking away from its commitment to the public and to our parks," added NPCA president Tom Kiernan. "The president promised the American public that he would 'restore and renew' America's national parks, but this budget makes it clear that the administration does not intend to keep that promise."

Within the fiscal year 2004 budget, the president has requested $1 billion for "deferred maintenance." Yet this pool of money will be used for more than just the maintenance backlog; some of it will be used for new building construction and new transportation infrastructure.

"The administration does a good job with their rhetoric," Selzer said. "But you have to step back and peel back the rhetoric to see that this is not much of an increase."

BLM Budget Eyes ANWR

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) would receive an increase of $42.8 million under the president's spending plan, which according to BLM Director Kathleen Clarke reflects that the department is "more committed than ever to our multiple use mission."

But conservationists argue that the primary mission of BLM under the Bush administration is to open public lands to oil and gas development, mining and logging. The budget contains speculative revenues of $1.2 billion from drilling within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), despite fierce opposition to the plan from many Congressional Democrats and some Republicans.

"By including the speculative revenues from proposed lease sales in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in his FY 2004 budget blueprint, the president has signaled a stubborn unwillingness to accept the clear opposition of the American people and bipartisan defeat of this scheme by the Senate last April," said Schlickeisen. "Instead, this budget tracks the fondest wishes of the administration's big oil constituency."

Some $10 million in additional money is earmarked for oil and gas production on BLM lands, and the budget contains a pledge by BLM to process 90 percent more applications for drilling permits and an additional 400 leases for oil and gas development. Land acquisition funds at BLM are cut by some $21 million, putting them close to 50 percent below enacted 2002 levels.

Wildfires and Endangered Species

The total firefighting budget within the Interior Department and the Forest Service is $2.2 billion, an increase of $219 million over last year's request. But this is still drawing the ire of many conservationists, who see misguided priorities within the administration's wildfire policy.

The Forest Service's budget includes an additional $3 million for its tree thinning program, and critics argue the Bush administration's so called Healthy Forests Initiative is a thinly disguised payout to the logging industry.

After analyzing the details of the budget, Bonnie Galvin, director of budget and appropriations for The Wilderness Society, said there is "only a one percent increase to reduce threats upfront and this money is going to get directed to thinning of forests in remote areas far from communities."

The president's spending proposal for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is $1.3 billion, only $4 million above the 2003 request. Funding for the operations and maintenance of the National Wildlife Refuge System received an increase of $25.5 million, putting its budget at $402 million.

Yet land acquisition, a critical component to protect National Refuges, is cut by $29.6 million from the 2003 request and some $56 million from the 2002 enacted total. State and tribal wildlife grants issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are cut by just $17,000 from last year, but when compared with 2002, this cut rises to some $26 million.

Cuts to state grants seem at odd with the Bush administration's ideology of increasing the role of states in environmental protection, Galvin said, and "this is the kind of program you'd think they'd really like and support."

"This budget will leave America with smaller, more degraded wild lands," Galvin added.

The president has increased the money available for administering the Endangered Species Act (ESA) by $3 million compared to his 2003 request. The total of $128.7 million is still well below what even the agency estimates it needs to administer ESA.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has estimated that its endangered species listing program faces a back log of some $137 million, with more than 250 species awaiting protection under the Act.

The U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) budget is proposed at $895.5 million, up some $28.2 million from last year's request, but down some $18 million from 2002 enacted funding.

Programs for mapping, remote sensing and geographic investigations are down $12.6 million from 2002. Water resources investigations face a cut of $6.3 million from 2002, but biological research is slated for an increase of $2.6 million.

Fishing for NOAA Numbers

The budget tricks alleged by conservationists appear to also be present in the proposed spending levels for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA). Administration officials boasted of a $190 million increase, which brings the agency's budget to $3.3 billion. But compared to enacted 2002 levels, this increase shrinks to $63 million.

The National Oceanic Service's budget is cut some $100 million from the 2002 level and the Bush spending plan eliminates the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program. NOAA's Oceanic and Atmospheric Research fares even worse, with proposed spending of $380.6 million compared to the $383.6 million appropriated in 2002.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), an often criticized maligned federal agency, receives an increase of some $30 million over the 2003 request. But this is a decrease of some $67 million from what was appropriated in 2002.

Although NMFS is known to need improvement in its monitoring and assessment of U.S. fish stocks, the administration proposes an increase over its 2003 request of just $6 million for these efforts.

"NMFS has responsibility for managing more than 900 fish stocks in the U.S. and it has a terrible track record," said Eli Weissman, ocean governance program manager for the Ocean Conservancy, adding that NMFS has fully assessed the status of only 23 percent of the 900 U.S. fish stocks.

Also of concern to conservationists is the proposed $90 million for the Pacific Salmon Recovery Fund is $20 million less than what was enacted in 2002. This is despite campaign promises by the president to support a fund many believe is critical to restoring salmon habitat up and down the West Coast.

"We are looking at the Bush administration budget cutting five percent since last year on the plan to restore salmon," said Nicole Cordan, policy and legal director of Save Our Wild Salmon. "This kind of a reduction shows a real lack of support for a program the President, when he was campaigning, pledged to fund and support."

IMBALANCED SCALES IT'S NOT ABOUT ESTRADA—IT'S ABOUT A DECADES-OLD BATTLE OVER THE JUDICIARY

So why are Senate Democrats filibustering President Bush's nomination of Miguel Estrada to one of the nation's most important courts?

Certainly Estrada has lived an admirable life. He came to the United States from Honduras at age 17, graduated from Harvard Law School and clerked for Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy. He was an assistant U.S. attorney, served as an assistant solicitor general under President Clinton and went on to a distinguished law firm.

To say the guy is no slouch is an understatement. But the fight over Estrada's nomination to the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia is not simply about him. It is about a concerted effort to pack our courts with representatives of a single point of view. If Democrats just rolled over on Bush's judicial nominations, they would be guilty of oppositional malpractice.

To understand this battle, you could go back to Richard Nixon's campaign against liberal judges. But let's just look at what happened to Bill Clinton's effort to get two highly qualified nominees onto the D.C. Circuit.

Elena Kagan, who served in the Clinton White House, graduated at the top of her class at Estrada's law school and now teaches there, saw her nomination languish in the Republican Senate for 18 months. Allen Snyder clerked for that well-known left-winger, Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist, and was also at the top at Harvard Law School. His nomination languished for 15 months.

If Republicans believe in voting for quality—their argument for Estrada—why didn't they confirm Kagan and Snyder? The answer is obvious: We have before us, sadly, a fierce political struggle for control over the courts.

It's not good enough to say that the way out of this politicized process is for Democrats to ignore the past and cave in to the Republicans. To do that would be to reward a determined conservative effort to control the courts for a generation. Stage One involved obstructing Clinton's nominees. Stage Two involves using any means necessary—including outrageous charges of ethnic bias—to ram conservative choices through.

The stakes go beyond any single nominee. Do we want courts entirely dominated by one side, or do we want a fair and balanced judiciary?

Consider these statistics, gathered by the Democratic staff of the Senate Judiciary Committee. There are 13 circuits: 11 regional, plus the D.C. Circuit and the federal court that handles specialized cases. If all of Clinton's nominees had been approved, the circuits would have been evenly balanced in partisan terms by the time he left office. Six would have had majorities appointed by Democratic presidents, six by Republicans, and one evenly split.

But if Bush succeeds in filling every open seat, some of them vacant because Clinton nominees were blocked, 11 of the 13 circuits will have Republican-appointed majorities. In eight of the 13, Republican nominees would have majorities of 2-1 or more. Is that a formula for careful, balanced decision-making?

To push attention away from this fundamental question, Republicans who say they don't want a politicized nominating process—and who regularly accuse Democrats of 'playing the race card'—are doing all they can to turn the Estrada fight into an ethnic imbroglio.

"If we deny Mr. Estrada the position on the D.C. Circuit, it would be to shut the door on the American dream of Hispanic Americans everywhere," Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, said in January. Last year, Republican Sen. Trent Lott of Mississippi said of the Democrats: "They don't want Miguel Estrada because he's Hispanic."

Never mind that eight of the 10 Hispanic appellate judges were appointed by Clinton. And never mind that Republicans had no problem blocking such Hispanic Clinton nominees as Enrique Moreno, Jorge Rangel and Christine Arguello.

But the Democrats will not win this argument if they just focus their opposition on individual nominees. The point of filibusters should be to seek a solution involving consultation across party lines. The goal would be moderate judges that both sides could agree on or, failing that, balanced slates of judges who could guard the country against a judiciary utterly dominated by one party.

Orrin Hatch, the Republican chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, is frustrated by what the Democrats are doing. "The system's going to be irreparably damaged if we allow this to go on," he said recently. A fair point, except that the system was damaged long ago, and the solution isn't to ram through Republican nominees. It's to seek compromise, balance and moderation. Then someone like Miguel Estrada might get though without any fighting at all.

E.J. Dionne, Jr. is a syndicated op-ed columnist for the Washington Post. He has been a frequent commentator on politics for National Public Radio, CNN and NBC's "Meet the Press." His second book, "They Only Look Dead: Why Progressives Will Dominate The Next Political Era" (Simon & Schuster), was published in February 1996.

BUSH'S MACHO POSTURING ON GERMANY

Published by the International Herald Tribune
by William Pfaff

PARIS—The second Bush administration is devoted to macho posturing with little consideration for the consequences. This could turn the trans-Atlantic confrontation into something for which Washington may eventually be very sorry.

The administration's effort to intimidate Germany and isolate France in the quarrel over military intervention in Iraq backfired on Friday at the UN Security Council and in the anti-war demonstrations of the weekend. Unless the inspectors find a mine shaft packed with drums of anthrax and nerve agents during the next few days, Washington is unlikely to win a mandate to go to war. This leaves Prime Minister Tony Blair in an extremely difficult situation. He has already dispatched British forces to the war. Without a second UN resolution endorsing intervention, ordering the troops into action would cause a Labour Party revolt. Whether he survives would depend on the war's outcome. George W. Bush and his more hawkish advisers believed that they could bully the Security Council's members and get what they wanted. They confided to reporters some days ago that objections by the French were already "fixed" and that Paris would fall in line, while the Germans would do what they were told.

France is accustomed to this treatment, but Germany is not. Germany is a very complex and in some ways mysterious nation (to Anglo-Americans, at least), and the pleasantries of Donald Rumsfeld, accompanied by the recent right-wing press campaign against Germany, have not only had a damaging effect on German-American relations but also have challenged the foundation of modern German foreign policy.

I was in Germany when Rumsfeld arrived in Munich this month after comparing German policy to the policies of Libya and Cuba. A very senior retired officer in the German Army (and NATO) asked me, "Why are they doing this?" He said: "You Americans have been telling us for 60 years that we must never go to war. You have made the Germans pacifists. We have accepted that war is never a solution. We believe that even more because of our own history. Now you attack us because Germans are against this war."

He made it plain that he was equally distressed that Germany should set itself against the United States. For half a century Germans have resolved their fundamental questions of security and "purpose" with a dual anchorage in Europe and in alliance with the United States. Until now the dual anchorage has remained solid, despite developing tensions between the Bush administration and Western Europe as a whole on a range of political, environmental and economic issues.

The anchorage has also survived persistent Gaullist arguments that sooner or later Europe will have to declare its independence of the United States. This idea never found much support in Germany because it raised possibilities that the Germans do not want to contemplate.

A split between Europeans and this American administration has nonetheless been coming. It became inevitable when Washington declared its own national strategy to be "full-spectrum domination" of the world's affairs.

The split is potentially most dangerous in Germany. Voters clearly chose pacifism over "preventive war" five months ago, in the parliamentary elections. Chancellor Gerhard Schröder might then, or since, have challenged his electorate, but had he done so (and still been elected) he would today be in the same position as Tony Blair and Silvio Berlusconi and José María Aznar, who are all seriously isolated from majority opinion.

The disagreement over Iraq did not have to be made into a bitter German-American confrontation. Alas, the Bush administration is led by bullies convinced that threats, denigration, personal attack and efforts to split the European Union are the way to deal with allies.

Defense Secretary Rumsfeld now is reported (by The Observer in London) to have told the Pentagon to prepare "to end military and industrial cooperation" between the United States and Germany, so as to "harm the German economy" and punish Germany's "treachery." Such is the Bush government's conception of alliance leadership.

As an ironical coda, it surely will not have escaped readers that the insults currently flung at the French, Belgians and Germans as "cowards" come from an American administration whose principal figures are, with one exception, draft dodgers, and from journalists who, if they respect the current advice of the U.S. government, will have spent recent days hiding under their beds surrounded by canned provisions, in duct-taped rooms, waiting for Osama bin Laden to cause the sky to fall on them.

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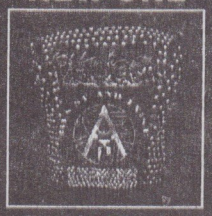

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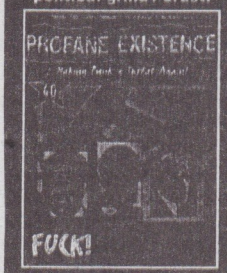

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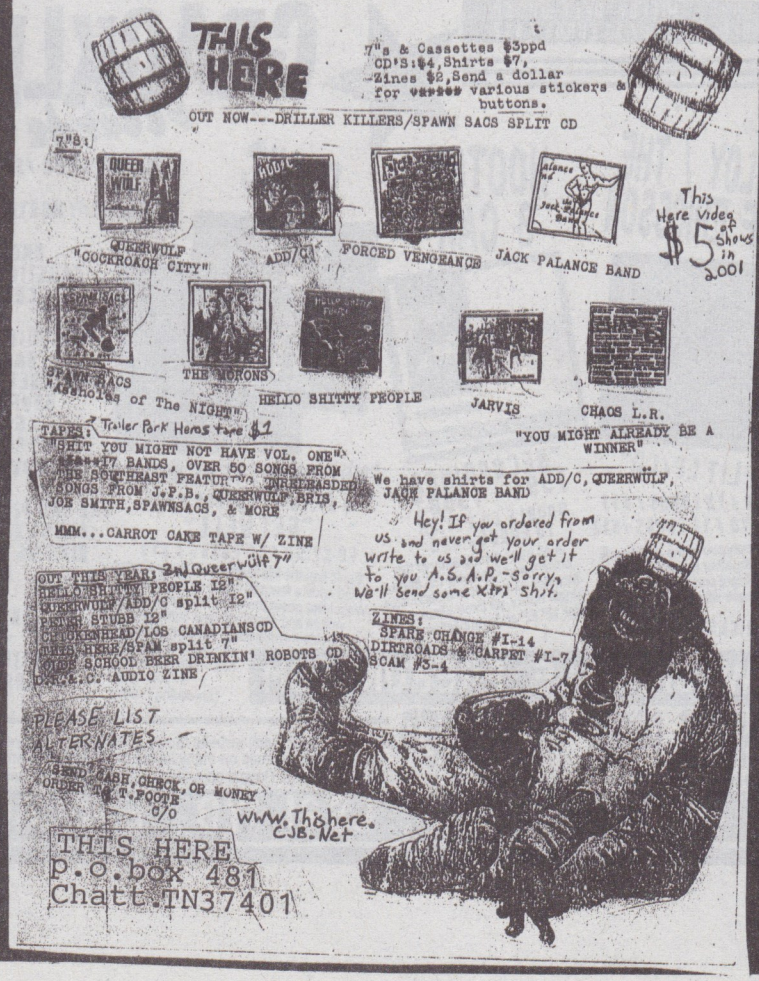

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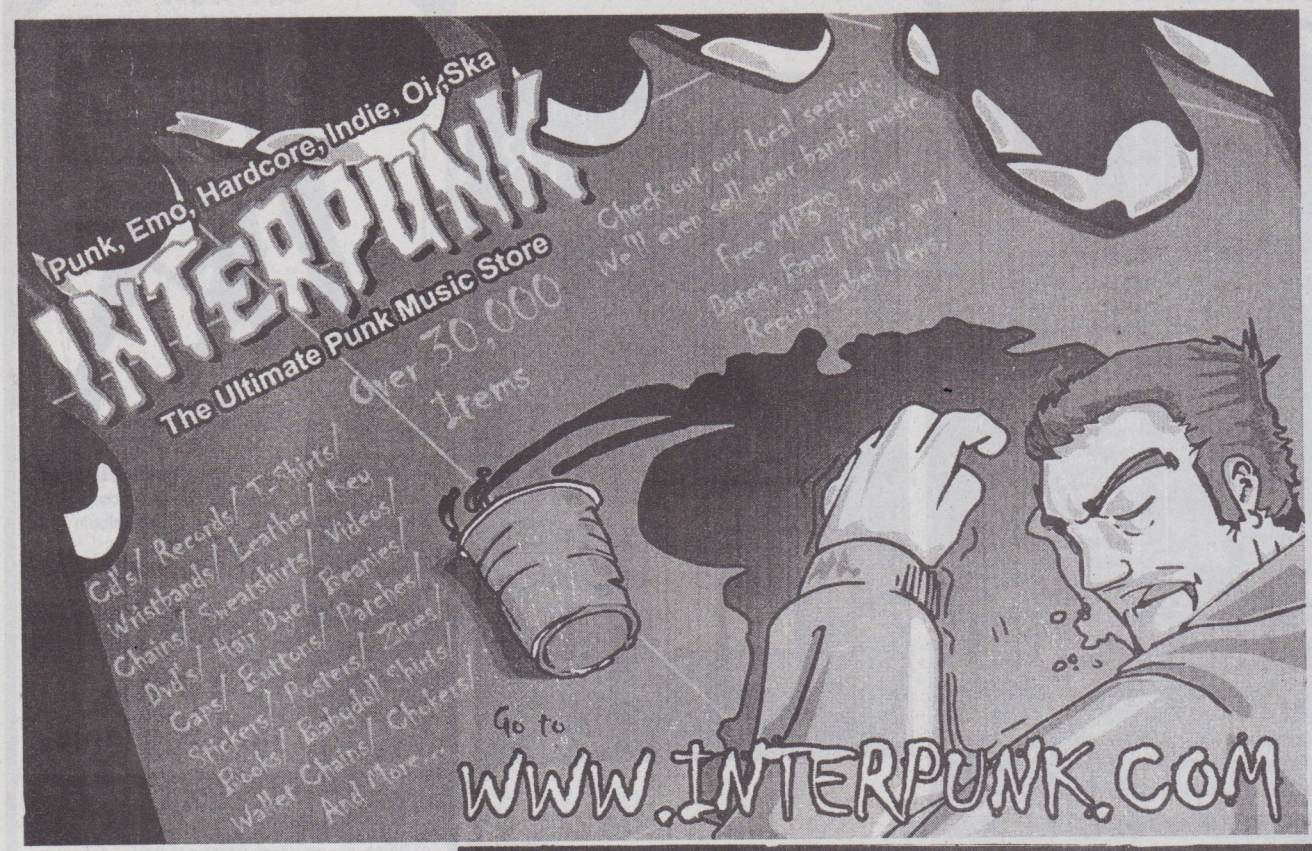

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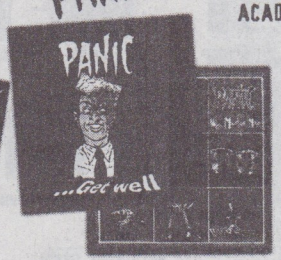

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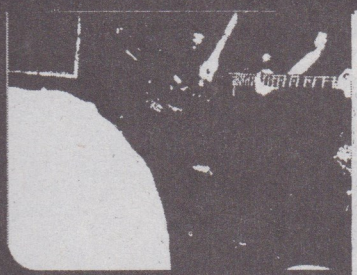

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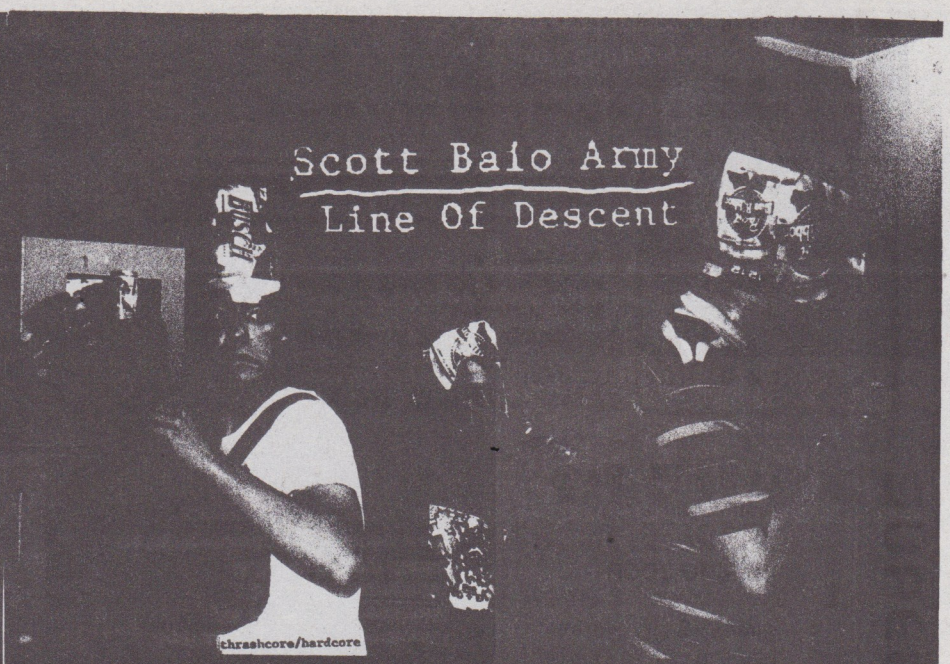

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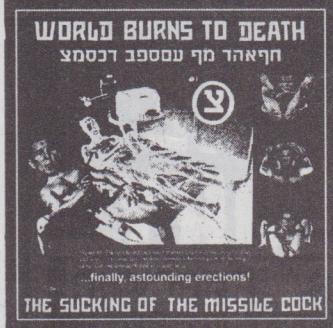

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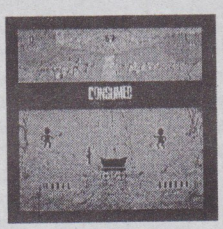

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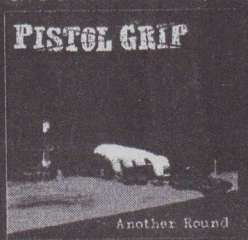

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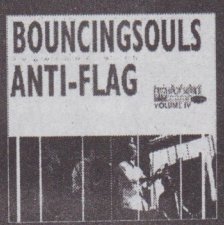

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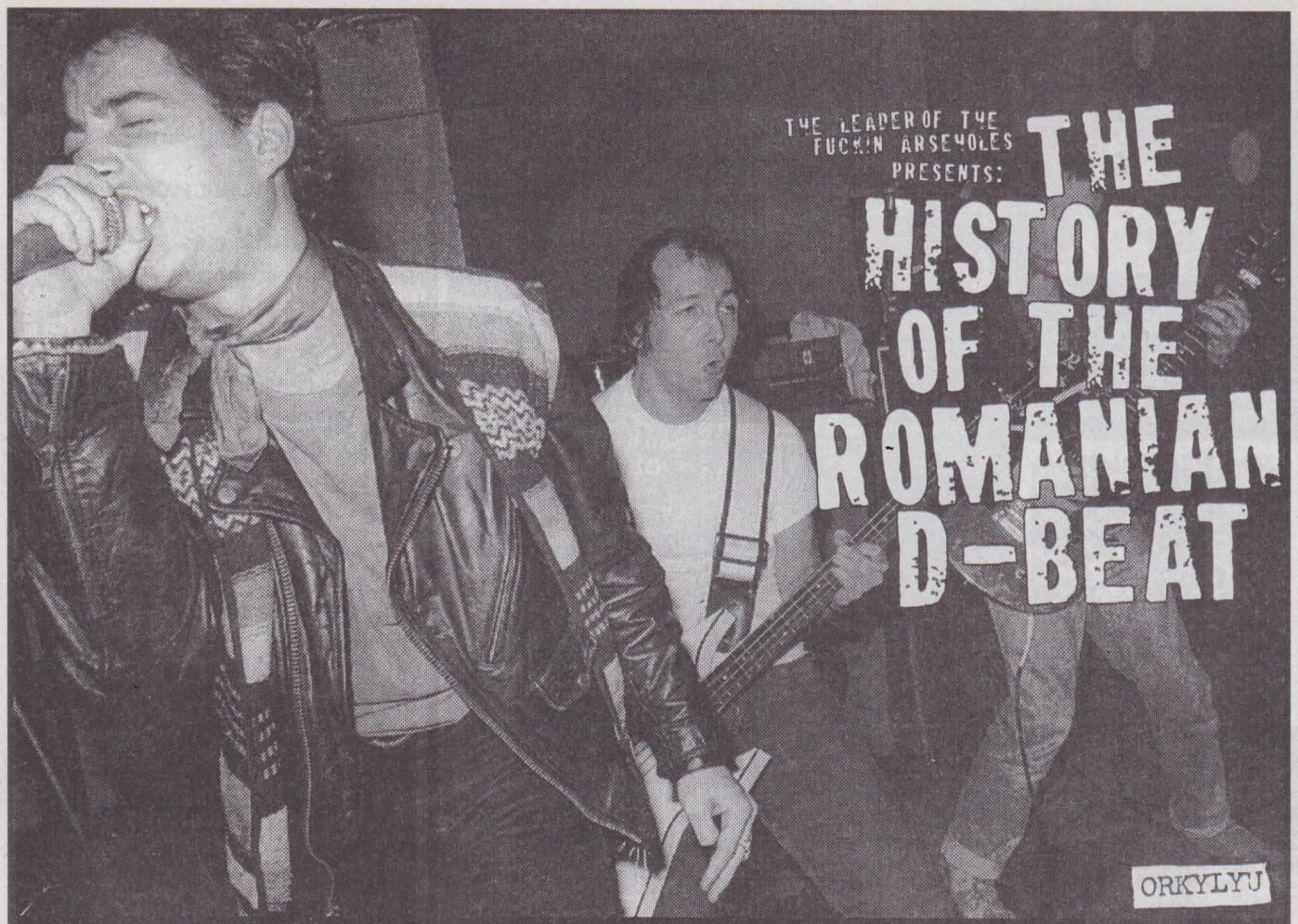

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Ceaucescu's degenerative neuropathy, and the revelation that the Stasi was spying on itself more than on anyone else, the Eastern European, and especially Romanian, hardcore scene had nowhere to go but up.

Through the Mongolian back door of samizdat tape trading, Romanian diehards were listening to bands such as The Clay and P-Nissarna as early as '87 according to the 'zine *Tiyliзy & Rudnrni* ("Studs & Citronella Candles"). However, official state repression did not allow live houses to put on shows with electric guitars. Despite a collaborationist streak among some punx in Romania, who attempted to mix acoustic guitars and the traditional Romanian clefiguu (a seven-stringed wind instrument) with lyrics about sniffing Turkish wallpaper adhesive, the true punx underground only laced its boots higher and prepared for battle.

When Disputyritu played its first show in '89, on the eve of the collapse of the Eastern bloc, several collaborationist hippie-punx are said to have syncoped when they heard the awesome power of the d-beat. This show was a home brewed vodka-fueled orgy of destruction and licentiousness. Even some secret policewomen in the crowd are said to have ripped their undergarments off and eaten them in a traditional Romanian show of respect for the awesome fury of Disputyritu. The Romanian hardcore scene would never be the same. Some optimists even think that the revolution against the frightful communism of late '80s Romania would not have succeeded if not for Disputyritu.

Within a few weeks, Selfish Records of Japan offered Disputyritu a deal which would have resulted in a split CD with Death Side. Unfortunately, Romania was still an unforgiving and rough country even for its heroes. Disputyritu's guitarist lost an arm while baling hay outside his grandfather's recently de-collectivized farm and the band sadly had to wire their British friends Chaos UK and ask if they could take Disputyritu's place on the split CD.

Luckily, by this point, bands had begun all over Romania. The underground was exploding at its seams with mohicans, herberts and skins, all influenced by the hardcore greats of yesteryear such as Tattooed Copcocks of Sweden and Plague of Cleveland. New bands such as Tloutkopiri Romanischu and Cqueu 89 began a rigorous touring schedule. They played every hamlet in the country. Cqueu 89 apparently had a large following among the horse breaker punx of Southeast Romania. As most of my readers surely know, horse breaker punx are some of the wildest men and women in the scene, so we can only imagine what the gigs must've been like when Cqueu 89 came through town. Reports of acid poured on the faces of cops trying to lower the volume on the Marshallski stacks are certainly unexaggerated.

It was in the summer of '92 that Orkylyu formed and reasserted the d-beat as the dominant rhythm of the Romanian scene. We all know that Germany's Gravesdout was well-respected throughout Europe despite revelations in spring '92 that second guitarist Aldo was honeymooning in the Leipzig symphony orchestra as a tympanist. Nevertheless Gravesdout asked Orkylyu to tour Scandinavia with them that fall. Some cynics might think of this as Gravesdout attempting to regain the primacy they had over the European scene a few years earlier. I personally think it was a gesture of goodwill toward comrades who lived for the core as they did. As the tour was set to begin, Orkylyu's drummer, Fightfist, fell gravely ill and lost his sight. There was no way they would miss this tour, so they asked Disputyritu's drummer to come out of retirement and fill in. What they forgot to ask him was, "Have you been living in Connecticut since the band broke up?" Of course, the answer was yes. It was Orkylyu's first show in Goteborg when they were booed off the stage and nearly killed by Jan Jutila for playing the infamous *State of Fear D-beat!* I cannot express the horror of the punx as they heard their favorite Romanian thrashers mangle the beloved beat by using double-kickdrum and hi-hat. Arghh...

Stay tuned for: *Part Two of the History of Romanian Hardcore* written by a real live Romanian.

MECONIUM RECORDS

Interview by Jason C. Snyder.

Photo by Dana Cox.

MRR: Hey Jon, what's up? First off I'd like to say thanks for taking the time to do this interview. I'm sure at least some of our readers are familiar with your work, but for everyone else, give us a little history on the various projects you've been involved with.

Jon: I am currently singing for Patheticism and in the past I have been the vocalist for Seven Foot Spleen, Hanging Rotten, and Stone of Abel. I also run my own record label, Meconium Records.

MRR: Despite as what could be seen as a relatively short lifespan, Seven Foot Spleen has been a big influence on a lot of sludge bands that have followed. How does it feel to be associated with something that has made that kind of impact within the scene, or hasn't it really been brought to your attention that much?

Jon: I never knew we were influential at all until very recently. It's very flattering and weird.

MRR: I knew you did some vocals on one of Stone of Abel's demos, but never heard you work with them again. How did you get involved with them and how come the split?

Jon: After Seven Foot Spleen I moved away from the area for awhile and when I moved back I joined Stone of Abel. At that time the band was made up of all the original Seven Foot Spleen lineup. I recorded with SOA one time. One of those songs appears on the Residue/SOA split 7" Berserker Records put out. I left the band after we did a weekend with Leechmilk. We didn't play very well and I just wasn't in to it anymore.

MRR: I am a big fan of your work with Hanging Rotten, but I find that a lot of people haven't even heard of them. Tell us a little bit about Hanging Rotten, who's in the band and some your releases? How did Hanging Rotten form?

Jon: Hanging Rotten started right after I left Stone of Abel. In the beginning it was just me and ex-SFS guitarist Chad Davis. We recorded a demo as a two-piece. We eventually wanted to play out so we started looking for a guitarist. We couldn't find anyone so we turned to Keith Bolick who played bass on SFs's *Enter Therapy* CD. With Keith we recorded songs for the mini CD that's out on Voice Productions Records out of Malaysia. Villain Records is releasing a 7" version of the same stuff minus the first song here in the USA. The demo plus one song was released as an LP by Putrid Filth Conspiracy in Sweden. I released two HR songs on my *Transcendental Maggot* comp. A couple songs are going to be on the next *Paranoize* comp too.

MRR: Is Hanging Rotten still active as a band?

Jon: Nope.

MRR: How your most recent project is Patheticism, and I'm dying to hear some of the new material. Tell us a little bit about Patheticism. Scott from Stone of Abel is in that, right? I remember him telling me something about that awhile back

Jon: Patheticism was just going to be a one off thing. I found out Very Small Records was doing another *Drinking Songs* comp and thought it'd be great to be on it. SFS had a song on the *Wood Panel Pacer Wagon With Mags* comp Very Small/Too Many put out. I'd talked to Scott about jamming sometime or something I think. Scott is one of my all time favorite bassists. I've known our guitarist Cory for a long time; since he played bass in a band called PUJ-who, by the way, were an awesome and totally original noise rock trio from Hickory NC around the same time SFS formed. Cory also plays bass for Black Iron Prison with our drummer Dave. They were both in Josey Wales too, who also appear on the comp I released. We ended up getting

rejected for the drinking comp but I heard about some other comps and we just kept at it and here we are. I don't know how I would describe Patheticism... heavy and sludgy but noisy and sloppy punk too. This is the most fun I've had in a band so far!

MRR: What are your plans with Patheticism? Any plans on recording a full length or anything like that yet?

Jon: No plans really. That's part of the fun. We just recorded. We're talking about putting out maybe a 7" or a split 7".

MRR: How has the response been for Patheticism thus far? I knew you guys were doing some touring and was wondering how that's been going so far.

Jon: We've only played out a few times, but so far the response has been good.

MRR: In addition to all the different bands you've been involved with, you also have a label Meconium Records. Give us some history on your label. Do you do it pretty much yourself, or do you have some help in running it?

Jon: I started Meconium Records right after I left SFS. My first release was a split 7" with SFS and another area band Kanker. Kanker was the band Scott formed after he left SFS. Next was the Astrid Oto S/T 7". Right around that same time I released a 7" for Algodon. This was a split release with Bottom Feeder Records. Algodon was Chad Wyrick and Josh Martin from SFS. I still have a few of these in stock I think. This is an awesome record. Total early 90s metallic hardcore like early Sleep meets Rorschach. Probably my favorite release so far. And yes, Algodon is Spanish for "cotton". You'd have to ask them about that. After that was the Insurgent 10". This was a joint effort between four different labels. The Transcendental Maggot comp cd was next and then. the Hawg Jaw/Face First split 7". Both of these were split releases with Riotous Assembly Records. Next up is the CD version of Hawg Jaw's *Believe Nothing* LP and a Mass Separation 7". The label is all me. No partners, no employees, no money.

MRR: How profitable is running your own label? I've heard alot of mixed things about it and it's something I've been thinking of starting up myself. Any chance that any possible Patheticism releases will appear on your own label?

Jon: Profit!?! What's that!?! The Patheticism 7" will most likely be a Meconium release whenever I can scrape together enough money to do it.

MRR: I meant to get to this question earlier, but it just came to me now. I was wondering what bands and music have influenced you and your vocal style most.

Jon: Some of my favorite vocalists are Blaine from The Accused & The Fartz, David Yow of the Jesus Lizard, Simon Bob Sinister when he sang for COC, Mike Hard of the God Bullies & Thrall, and that guy who sang for Iowa Beef Experience. It's a mixed bag of influences.

MRR: Speaking of vocals...how do you do it? You have a really sick, low tone to your vocals that is easily recognizable. Is there anything you do to keep your throat in top condition?

Jon: My throat is so not in top condition. My doctor told me to stop doing this years ago. I'm just hard headed.

MRR: I was wondering what else you do in addition to your music and running your label? Do you have another job outside of all the different bands?

Jon: I'm in school right now and I'm married to a wonderful woman and I have a cat and a dog. Normalsville!

MRR: Well Jon, I'd like to say thanks a lot for taking the time to do this interview! You can end this however you want, the floor is yours.

Jon: Thanx for the interview! Patheticism will be playing in Savannah, Georgia February 7th and in New Orleans February 8th with Hawg Jaw, Kylesa, & Face First. Check out the Meconium Records site. I distro tons of other labels' stuff too!
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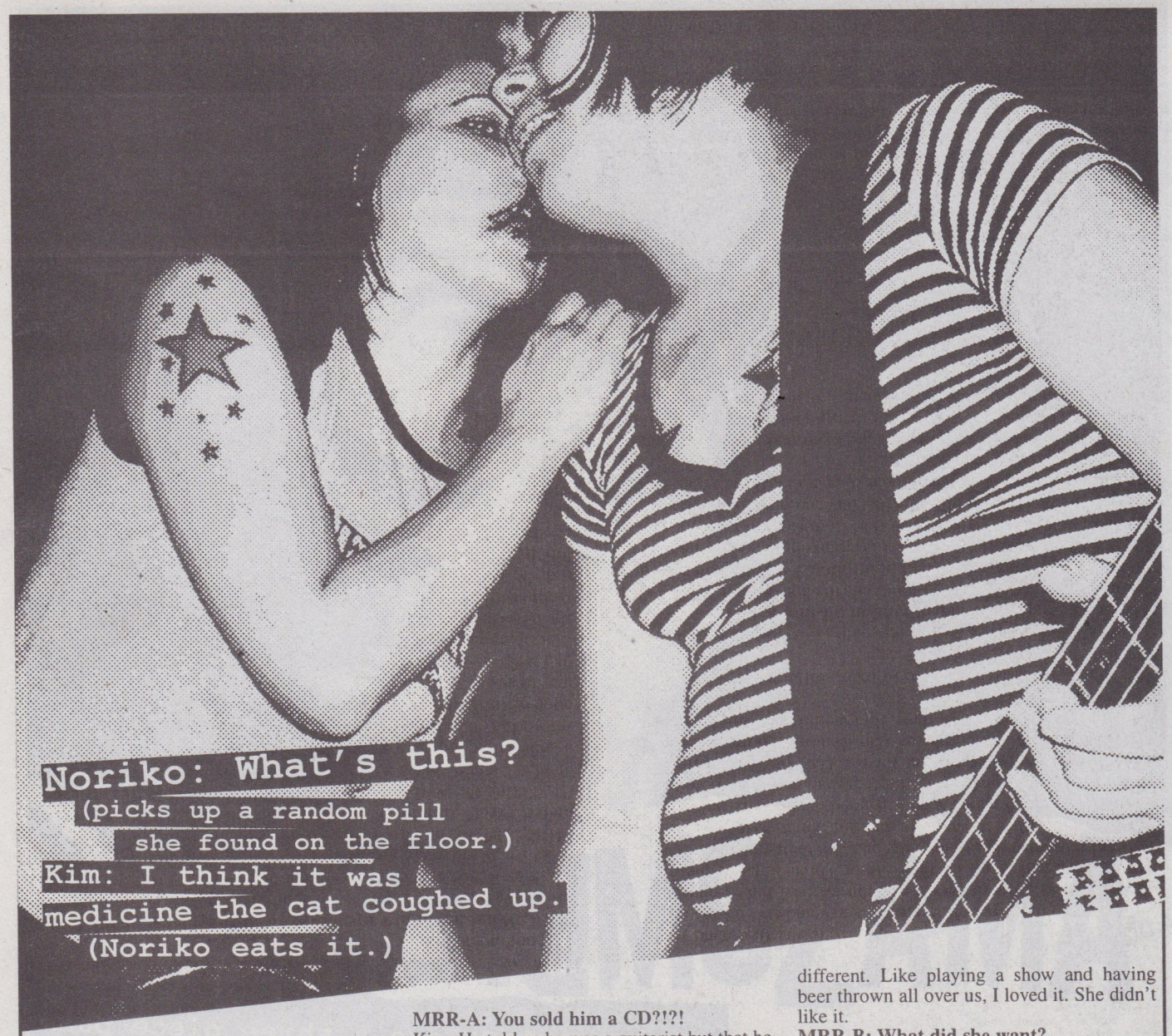
AMAZOMBIES

The AMAZOMBIES are a three piece punk band based in Seattle, Washington. Noriko plays bass, Kim plays guitar, and Josh is the drummer. Each member sings, but most of the time it's Kim. This interview was done in Kim's house in Seattle by The Shemps: Bill Florio, Artie Philie and Squeaky Wilentz.

MRR-B: Ok let's give the intro. How did all this crap start?
Noriko: When I moved here from Japan, I wanted to start a band, so I started a band with these two crappy musicians.
Josh: Josh and Kim…
Noriko: No! The original girls I started the band with, we sucked but it was fun because…
MRR-B: …because you were in a band. Did you play shows with them?
Noriko: No, I met Kim before our first show. She auditioned for the band, and as soon as I saw her I wanted to be in a band with her.
Kim: Wahhh! (Pretending to cry).
Noriko: So I decided to kick out the original guitarist and she gave me a grunge kick.
MRR-B: What's that?
Noriko: A kick with holes in her jeans. She didn't know how to play power chords. She was like, "Noriko, you want me to play with all four fingers?"
MRR-A: Wow, I never played with all four fingers.
MRR-B: I know a girl that likes that sorta stuff!
MRR A: Yeah, she'll be selling our T-shirts in LA.
MRR-B: When did you live in Japan?
Noriko: I was born in LA and I lived in Japan from when I was four 'til high school. I went to elementary school in New York.

MRR-B: Is that why you don't speak Engrish?
Noriko: Herro? I went to school in Westchester County.
MRR-S: Do they make fun of the way you speak in Japan?
Noriko: Yes! Oh, not in Japan, the band makes fun of me. They think I'm an American in Japan and they think I'm Japanese here. So I have no place to go…
Kim: I don't think you're Japanese. You're totally American. Except for that big Cherry-Hawse in yer leg right now.
MRR-B: You don't drink enough to qualify as Japanese anyway.
Noriko: No. If I was true Japanese I wouldn't have been puking tonight.
MRR-S: That's not true. I saw Yoshiko (from The 5, 6, 7, 8s) puke a lot!
Noriko: Oh Yoshiko! I love her, you know her?



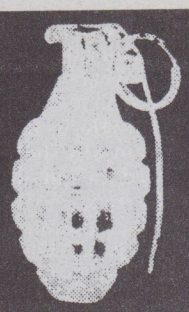
MRR-S: Yeah, look I have a shirt... no, not this shirt, the shirt underneath, look!
Kim: You're wearing two orange t-shirts at the same time?
MRR-A: So when did Kim and Josh move here from Japan? (laugh)
MRR-B: What did Josh do before THE AMAZOMBIES?
Josh: Well, I used to tune pianos.
MRR-B: "I was a pool cleaner; I managed a little league team"
(At this point someone farts loud and no one owns up to it.)
Josh: I played guitar in a few bands. This is the first time I've played drums in a band, and I've only been playing for two years. (Kim is waving a paper plate) Uh, sorry.
Kim: It really was you? I thought it was Noriko!
Josh: I was playing guitar in this band called The Hellcats and I saw them (The Amazombies) play with their original drummer. I went to see them again and their drummer didn't show up, so I offered to play drums for them and Noriko made me buy a CD.
MRR-A: You sold him a CD?!?!
Kim: He told us he was a guitarist but that he never played drums in a band before. We were skeptical of that and the fact the he lived in Olympia and we lived an hour north in Seattle. But Josh promised to drive up from Olympia to practice twice a week. Me and Noriko asked each other, "Should we make him pay for the CD?" So we're like, yeah right, let's make him pay. He worked hard for it! The first test was when he moved to Seattle.
Noriko: The second test was his van broke down and he was taking Greyhound twice a week to practice.
MRR-B: So what happened to the first drummer?
Noriko: We were friends. It was fun and all, but she quit because she got a better opportunity. She joined Scared of Chaka as a touring bass player, a fill in.
MRR-S: Scared of Chaka?
MRR-A: Squeaky just said Scared of Chaka like it was Van Halen.
Noriko: Squeaky, get the fuck out of the house! (laughs) The second drummer was a little older, and we thought we got along, but a lot of what we believed in was completely different. Like playing a show and having beer thrown all over us, I loved it. She didn't like it.
MRR-B: What did she want?
Kim: Respect.
Noriko: She didn't care if 200 people showed up to the show; she wanted 20 people to kiss her ass.
Kim: She wore a Madonna microphone. Does that give you a good picture?
Noriko: We went on tour with her and we bought this big bag of chips at Costco in San Diego and we saw this bum begging on the side of the road.
MRR-A: Is that how Josh really joined the band?
Noriko: So I was like, "Maybe we should give him the bag of chips."
Kim: It was like one of those weird freeway on ramps where you have a red light that gives you 5 seconds to get on and I didn't know what they were doing back there, so I just went and they didn't get the chips to him in time.
Noriko: And our old drummer flips out at Kim later on. "You are the biggest bitch I've ever met. You refused to give that bum a bag of chips. You walk around pretending to be nice but I know you're the biggest bitch ever. Even Noriko seems nicer than you!"

MRR-A: I can't believe someone who would be so easily offended will still call a person a bum.
Noriko: What's this? (picks up a random pill she found on the floor.)
Kim: I think it was medicine the cat coughed up. (Noriko eats it.)
MRR-B: OK, its time for you two to tell the real story. Kim needs to explain why she's so damn punk rock. (This wasn't really how I worded the question, but it's better than me dragging the story out of her.)
Kim: Ok. I grew up in a very religious household, not like Catholic religious either… I played piano. I was always singing and playing music. I always wanted to be in a band and play my own music but my parents were very religious, and that was very bad. Your whole life is supposed to be dedicated to God. Music is always good. They encouraged me to play piano. In that respect they encouraged me; my grandparents bought me my first piano. It wasn't that I wanted to play music; it's just that I wanted to make music a priority and this would never be allowed.
MRR-B: You had to make God your priority.
Kim: Oh yeah. Even with college… you did not grow up thinking you were going to college. You only do whatever is legally required, like high school, and then you spend the rest of your life serving God.
MRR-A: In what way? Like evangelical stuff, going door-to-door?
Kim: Yeah, teaching people about our church. So, I ended up getting married. See, either you stay in the church and get married or… It was not allowed to be in a casual dating situation by the church. So we got married when we were 18.
MRR-A: We're you into punk at this point?
Kim: Absolutely.
MRR-S: Were you're parents supportive of the marriage?
Kim: Well, they were thinking we were a little young but they were happy that I was marrying within the church: "Yeah, you're so young, but at least it's not someone who's Catholic!" So, yes…
MRR-A: How could you be into punk rock while in this environment? Did your parents approve of that?
Kim: Absolutely not! My brother was grounded for listening to Morrissey. It was all about just doing what we could without getting caught.

ried we were living on our own and it became much easier to go see bands… but we still ended up going to church because that's how we were both raised, and it was all we knew. And when we were 20, we were like, why are we still doing this? We realized that we weren't involved in the church because we we're into God, it was just how everyone was raised. So we got out. We stopped going to church and moved to Seattle, and I met the original drummer from the Amazombies. Now my parents know what I do; my dad tries to be pretty supportive, my mom cries every time she sees me in person. I've only seen her a couple of times in the past three years for about ten minutes at a time.
MRR-B: Do you think she'll get over it?
Kim: No. She's extremely religious. She'd rather be faithful to her God and her beliefs than have a relationship with her child.
MRR-S: Was she brought up in the church too?
Kim: No, she was raised Catholic. When she married my dad when she was …pregnant. Before she was married, she became involved in the religion that she is into now. My dad was actually extremely rebellious when he was younger and got into the religion later, like the whole time I was growing up. Now he's divorced and he's not into it at all. But he calls me and tells me I should be…
MRR-B: When I was twelve I told my mom that it wasn't cool for me to go to church with her, so she let me walk to a later mass, and I would take the dollar for the basket and bet on football illegally at the candy store. (laughs)
Josh: Yeah, I grew up Catholic too.
(We all look at Noriko)
Noriko: I don't like to talk about it. I'm not over it like Kim is.
Kim: I'm not over it.
Noriko: When I think about my parents I always feel like I'm doing something bad. The guilt…
Kim: I feel guilt. All the time.
MRR-B: The guilt has been instilled in you; it's not something that just goes away.
Noriko: It's not religious at all. My parents were never religious. I was just born to parents who believe that the happiness of their child will be determined by financial success.
Kim: Like, my parents spiritual freak-out is her parents' education/financial freak-out.
Noriko: We've been married for five years but my parents won't meet Chad. It's because he doesn't have a college degree. I've been living in the States for so long they don't care that he's not Japanese or anything like that…
MRR-S: What do your parents do?
Noriko: My dad is a very successful businessman and my mom is a very successful housewife. Every single song I write, it's about them. I try to get away from their curse but it just doesn't happen. This is getting depressing.
Kim: I feel like I'm at a shrink.
MRR-B: So what do you guys think about being a *ahem* "girl band?"
Noriko: Well, I hate that no one can ever say anything about us that's not just a canned girl band thing. Like some woman in the Chicago Reader compared Kim to Joan Jett. She doesn't sound anything like Joan Jett. The Joan Jett reference is getting old…
MRR-B: I dunno if you should get annoyed with things people write about ya, I mean, look at the kind of dorks that go to Journalism school.
MRR-A: I write for like three magazines and look at me, I have your puke all over my pants.
MRR-B: Hey, why is there a picture of your boobs on the cover of the record?
Noriko: I got a tattoo that says "Rock n' Roll" on my chest and we thought it would make the greatest album cover ever. Rock n' roll boobs! But unfortunately, it looked like an ass.
MRR-B: Boobs look like a butt. Actually, in a lot of animals the chest and the butt are symmetrical. A friend of mine hates cleavage when it looks like a butt.
MRR-S: Do you have tattoos like that on your ass too?
Noriko: Yeah. Like, twenty of them.
MRR-A: That's some ass.

The AMAZOMBIES' CD is called "Bitches & Stitches" and can be obtained from Go-Kart Records or www.theamazombies.com. They will be touring the U.S. east coast this spring.

THE ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB



THE ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB are a band from the Toronto area that play some of the sickest technical crossover since DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN. Featuring members from SPREAD THE DISEASE, NEW DAY RISING, and INFUNERARY, the band has a lot of experience to back up their complicated assaults. They also incorporate a synthesizer for that LOCUST chaos sound. Their music is over the top and has been compared to the likes of KISS IT GOOD-BYE and BOTCH. We conducted an interview live at the station when they played, but the tape didn't turn out, so Frankie Fuckface was good enough to answer these questions again via email. Frankie Fuckface (vocals and vocal programming), Sunny Suicide (guitar, guitar processing, and programming), Terry Titfuck (drums, programming, and studio engineering), Shitty Pete: (keyboards, sampling, and drum machine), Kenny Kuthroat (bass), and Billy Curtiss (guitar).

Interview by Stephe Perry.

MRR: The ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB have members that grew up in the Mississauga/Oakville scenes scenes where a huge amount of great bands have developed. What is it about Oakville and Mississauga that made them produce so many great bands?

Frankie Fuckface: Oakville and Mississauga have tended to produce a lot of good bands for a variety of different reasons. First, it is important to mention that Oakville and Mississauga are suburbs, so many of the kids who are musically active in the scene come from comfortable economic backgrounds. They can afford equipment and quite often have the luxury of being able to practice in a free space (their basement, garage, etc.). Their parents tend to be supportive and help out with the costs of being in a band. Some of us have come from this exact situation and are privileged in ways that others are not. A few of our parents are very supportive, so we have been provided with a climate that is favorable to our musical endeavors. Although a lot of us are now independent, there was of course a time when we received a lot of help from our families. Some people try to hide this fact, we're rather thankful that we were provided with the opportunity to do something that we all love so much. Oakville and Mississauga have also tended to have reasonably priced venues for shows. Therefore, it is easy to become musically active because setting up a show is totally feasible. I currently live in Toronto, and venues are four times more expensive to rent. So, once again, economics come into play. The suburban scene has also produced a variety of great bands with different sounds. A lot of us grew up listening to different types of hardcore, this mixture of influences tended to produce a scene with a ton of different sounding bands. I think the kids in Oakville and Mississauga and the music that comes out of their scene support my point that it is a diverse and well-rounded scene. All the genres of hardcore seem to coexist in a unified way in the Oakville/ Mississauga scene. It's always been that way.

MRR: Can you tell us what bands you played in before the ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB ?

Frankie Fuckface: Prior to THE ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB, Terry drummed, Kenny played guitar, and I sang for SPREAD THE DISEASE. Kenny also played guitar in NEW DAY RISING and bass in THE CHINA WHITE. Sunny has played guitar in a few local bands, including IGNORANCE NEVER SETTLES, AVARICE, COUNTDOWN TO OBLIVION, and FUNERARY. Shitty Pete played in smaller bands that stuck mostly to playing the local scene. Billy Curtiss is from Northern Ontario, so he played in a bunch of bands up there, including BURNT KERNELS and GALLAHAD'S PAD. And he played acoustic guitar in a bar band called THE BLACK SABBATH TRIBUTE, how fucking cool is that?

MRR: How did ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB form?

Frankie Fuckface: The ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB originated out of boredom! I had been without a band for a few years and I felt the need to start something up again. I was living in a house with a bunch of friends, it was actually convenient, because a few of my roommates were really talented musicians and we could practice in our basement. Sunny and I lived across the hall from one another and our taste in music was strikingly similar so it was only a matter of time before we started really tossing around the idea of starting something serious. We were living with Kevin Finlayson—formerly of GRADE, the best drummer they ever had by the way—and his university was on strike, so he was interested in playing; he had nothing else to do. We all started to practice together in December of '00 and there was potential; Kevin actually wrote our first song with us as it appears on our CD EP.

The ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB began to grow. Kenny was the next to join in early '01. He played guitar in SPREAD THE DISEASE, but had taken up playing bass. We'd been good friends for years, so I wanted him involved in the band. Sunny played with him in another band in which Terry played drums and he knew that he would fit in nicely. We knew we needed another guitar player. Kenny suggested Billy Curtiss, a musician that he had met at a local coffee house, who was a SPREAD THE DISEASE fan and an amazing guitar player. He joined sometime in February or March of '01, and he was enthusiastic from the get go. We all wanted an electronic element in the band so I contacted Terry. He had played drums in SPREAD THE DISEASE but had since amassed a bunch of gear and became interested in programming. I was also friends with Pete; he owned some keyboards and shortly joined to play as a keyboardist too. We originally planned to have two people doing electronics but things fell through. Kevin's university settled the strike and he could not practice that often. He also began to play with some guys from BLAKE and became more interested in that project, so he left THE ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB. It was an amicable split, but it was also a huge musical blow to the band. Kevin was one of the best drummers I knew, so filling his shoes was difficult. We held try-outs for a new drummer but we could not find anyone that could play drums skillfully (or even properly for that matter). Terry soon offered to play drums, which was great because he knew our sound and was a competent drummer. Things have pretty much been the same ever since.

MRR: What was the initial idea behind what kind of band you wanted to start?

Frankie Fuckface: I don't think we shared a definite idea of what kind of band THE ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB was going to be. I think we all wanted the band to be somewhat experimental , while retaining some sort of structured sound. We wanted to be intense, to have the anger of a band like KISS IT GOOD-BYE,. while writing music that tested our collective preconceptions of what a hardcore band was supposed to sound like. We wanted to write heavy music, that's one thing

that we could all agree on! We did have a strong desire to write music that would be crushing, to write punishing music that would motivate an audience to fucking lose it. We wanted to be different, but we also wanted to craft a sound that could be consumed and enjoyed. We wanted to retain groove; but also be progressive. We just wanted to make people move in typical hardcore fashion while playing a type of music that was completely different.

MRR: Where did the name THE ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB come from ?

Frankie Fuckface: The name itself was derived from Jean Paul Sartre's *Nausea* and refers to our view on the human condition. We believe that many of us feel abandoned in our lives and that this reality indirectly influences our actions. Most of us fear loneliness and we believe this actuality is something that oppresses humans universally. Alienation is our common insecurity, it is this idea which best explains why we operate cohesively as THE ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB.

MRR: Who do you consider influences for the ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB sound?

Frankie Fuckface: Every member of THE ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB is influenced by different bands from different genres. The majority of us came out of the metal and hardcore scenes so we are obviously influenced by aspects of both of these musical genres. Conceptually, I think we are influenced by bands like FAITH NO MORE, PINK FLOYD, and NEUROSIS. We collectively appreciate bands that have tested the boundaries of their genre by creating music that is completely original and emotional. We strive to be different and derive inspiration from musical acts that have always pushed their genre into new directions. Musically, we are influenced by contemporary bands like COALESCE, DEADGUY, BOTCH, CONVERGE, and DROWINGMAN.

MRR: Describe your sound. What would you say you sound like to folks from the hardcore scene that may not have heard you but a familiarity with hardcore descriptors?

Frankie Fuckface: Pinning down the sound of The ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB is somewhat difficult. We are one of those bands that draw from a variety of influences from different genres. Many listeners have said that our music is comparable to bands like BOTCH or MINUS, however, we have a strong electronic component that neither of those bands really have. I think we are aligned with those bands in that we all write music that is beyond the structure and sound of conventional hardcore. We obsess over being different and I think that is what gives us uniqueness in the hardcore genre. The ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB has more of an intensity than a definite, definable sound. I think that we have the viciousness of bands like KEELHAUL and TURMOIL; bands that have mastered writing ultra-aggressive music that retains a high degree of energy.

Our electronic element is simply incomparable. You have bands like ISIS and NEUROSIS that you use their technology to build ambient atmospheres, and bands like THE LOCUST that use their keyboards simply to generate indistinguishable noise. We do neither; we use a lot of blatant sampling, artificial drum loops, synthesized sounds, and heavily processed vocals in our songs. I guess we are more influenced by what industrial bands have done before us. We've just applied it to a different type of music and used it in a completely new way.

MRR: You released a CD EP by yourself. You seem to be talented enough to be on a major hardcore label, why did you release the first CD EP on your own ?

Frankie Fuckface: The band has always had a strong mandate of being as independent and professional as possible. We released the CD ourselves because we could. We had access to start-up capital, our own recording studio, and have a drummer who is an overly talented graphic designer. We are a self-sufficient unit that does not necessarily need a label to rely on. I firmly believe that we could continue to operate this way if we truly wanted to. However, it is difficult to work in this fashion, you find that everyone has too many responsibilities and that the music becomes secondary to business. I am the vocalist but I am also the accountant and the booking agent. Sometimes you want to pass off these responsibilities and focus on the music, I think we have now reached that point.

We have had a ton of interest from a variety of labels. Revelation Records approached us in late '01. A publicist contacted us and we spoke very briefly about working together. Our visual image (packaging, layouts, web design, etc.) is a strong component of the band's vision, and they could not comprehend that we wanted to do creative releases rather then standard-issue layouts. They were too rigid—the way big labels tend to be. We have since been contacted by a few American labels: *Hydra Head Records*, *Happy Couples Never Last*, *Century Media*, and *Scenester Credentials*, to name a few. European labels like *Genet* and *Staf* have contacted us as well. We still operate independently; labels have either been too busy to take us on or simply not to our overall liking. We have continued to record new music for another possible self-release, but we are more focused on booking our '02 summer tour with THE END at the moment. We have contributed a track to a *Hydra Head Records* vs. *Double H Noise Industries* compilation that will also feature TRIBES OF NEUROT, ATOMSMASHER, HOUSE OF LOW CULTURE, and tons of other innovative bands. We have been told that it will be released during the summer of '02. *Hydra Head* is the only label we have worked with; they are one of the few labels that consistently release high-quality music with groundbreaking designs, so we're eager to see this project released.

MRR: What are some of your song titles and how do they reflect your lyrics ?

Frankie Fuckface: My song titles are just an extension of lyrical themes; they are the embodiment of the song's meaning. Citing song titles would be somewhat irrelevant, they are such a small aspect of my writing, and quite honestly, I always pen them after the lyrical body is written. My song titles are relative to my lyrics but are not any greater than the lyrical body that they represent. I try to write cohesively and there is an overall unity in my work. Critics can attack my writing style, but I think they'd agree that what I write is direct in its meaning.

MRR: Frankie, when SPREAD THE DISEASE played at CHRY you described your lyrics as left-wing. I found that particularly interesting, given that the history of metal leans more to the right and the reactionary. Is this still the case?

Frankie Fuckface: I continue to write from a militant left-wing perspective. I firmly believe that art must be political so I have continued to use music as a vehicle for agitation. Contemporary punk rock is fairly apolitical and I try to combat this apathy by remaining true to punk's original critical nature. Today's punk is, for the most part, intellectually stale and I can only hope that our message inspires some kind of critical thought by our listeners.

MRR: You played out in Sudbury, how did that come about ?

Frankie Fuckface: Billy Curtiss, our guitar player, is originally from Sudbury, Ontario, and he really wanted us to play his hometown. Sudbury, for those who don't know, is a fairly small Northern Ontario town that developed around various mining operations. Most bands from Toronto would never consider playing Sudbury but our band likes to travel to small towns. The kids in these towns tend to be hungry for new music and they always appreciate when an out-of-town band makes the effort to play their scene. Some of our most loyal fans are from rural areas and we're down with playing shows for enthusiastic people. City folk tend to be jaded so we're all about taking hardcore to the country!

MRR: What do you hope to accomplish as a band, in general ?

Frankie Fuckface: The ABANDONED HEARTS CLUB intends to continue releasing music that redefines the hardcore genre. We plan to work with labels that share our passion for creativity without ever sacrificing our collective punk ethic. We hope to tour as much as possible and play in as many different towns (and countries) as we can. We'll eventually become the greatest rock band ever and enjoy our place in The Rock 'N' Roll Hall of Fame.

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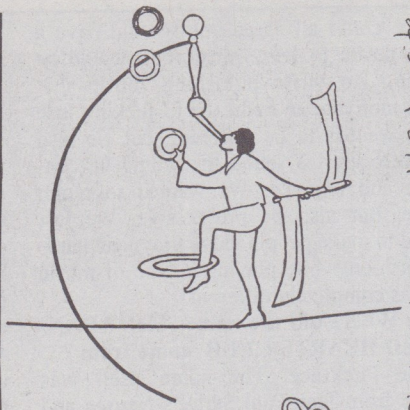

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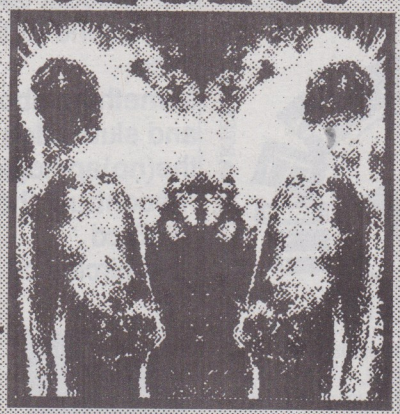

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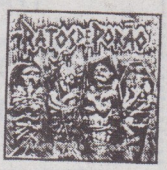

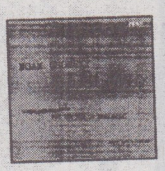

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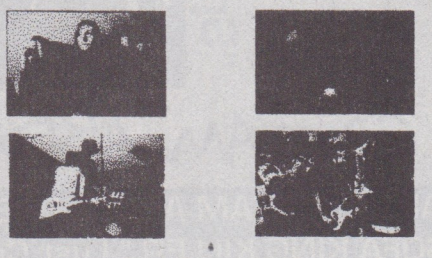

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by evan cohen book w/cd

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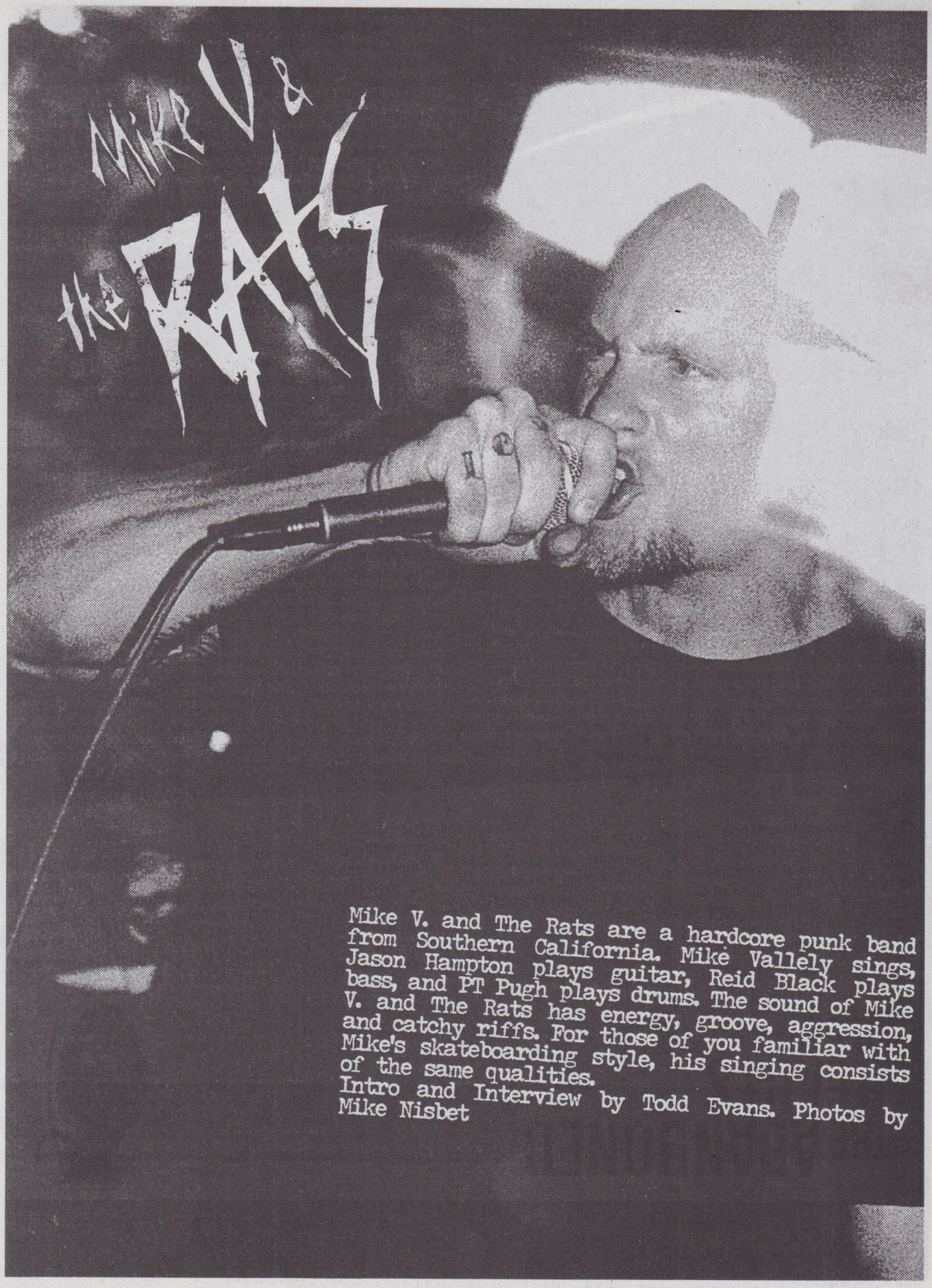
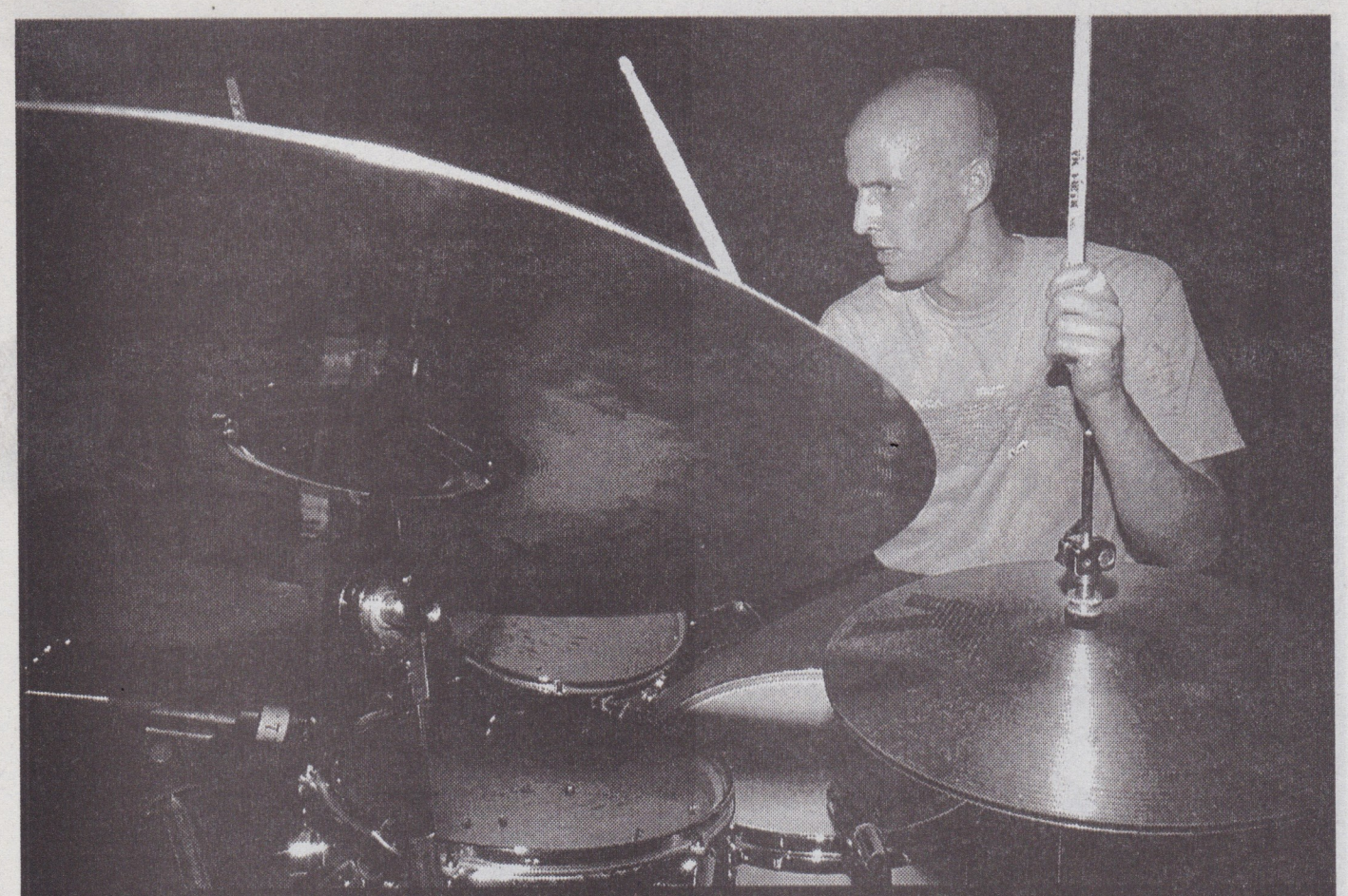


Mike V. and The Rats are a hardcore punk band from Southern California. Mike Vallely sings, Jason Hampton plays guitar, Reid Black plays bass, and PT Pugh plays drums. The sound of Mike V. and The Rats has energy, groove, aggression, and catchy riffs. For those of you familiar with Mike's skateboarding style, his singing consists of the same qualities.

Intro and Interview by Todd Evans. Photos by Mike Nisbet



MRR: Can you talk a little bit about how the response has been from people at your shows? Do you think a lot of people already have a preconceived opinion about the band, good or bad, because Mike sings for it?

Jason: People are going to have their opinions, good or bad, about the band before seeing us or hearing us. But there's nothing better than the feeling of getting on stage and completely annihilating any preconceived opinions or judgments about the band.

PT: I think Mike's name gets us in the door sometimes, but the music still has to be good for people to stick around. Most people have to be told what to like instead of figuring it out for them self anyway.

Reid: Yeah, the response I've seen has been good although I haven't been in the band from the very beginning. I don't think that a lot of people know about the band yet. But from the experience of opening some shows for CKY, people were excited about the band as soon as they knew, or saw that Mike was singing for it. This doesn't bother me though because I think that all people just need some kind of introduction to a band to get into it. So if they see Mike in a skate video or at a contest, and then give us a second look then it's alright.

MRR: As far as your music is concerned, what do you think has the most significant influence on the band's sound? Is there a particular sound you guys are striving for collectively?

Jason: For me, I don't think it is so much a sound, but more of a feeling we are trying to keep alive. I remember when I was a kid and going to see punk bands, it felt totally different than what we have going on today. When that band hit that first note, it was like getting hit by a semi. We want people to have that same feeling when they come to see Mike V and The Rats play. We want it to feel like an explosion went off. Non-stop energy. I think the younger kids need that experience.

MRR: This question is for Mike. What are the similarities, or differences, between your approach to music versus skateboarding?

Mike: It's the same approach, as with every interest or passion of mine, straight from the heart and soul.

MRR: What music, outside of the Rats, have you been listening to lately? Do you guys listen to a lot of new bands?

Mike: I rarely listen to any new bands or new music. My favorite bands are still the early eighties hardcore bands I grew up with, and I'm really big on listening to singer songwriters like Steve Earle, Dylan, Springsteen, Mellencamp and Joe Grushecky as well.

Reid: Right now, I'm listening to a lot of Bob Dylan also. His music just works up some kind of feeling in me. At times though I can grow frustrated with rock music's rigidity like all that 4/4 verse-chorus-verse-chorus-bridge-verse-chorus business. That's when I turn to those old 70s artists like Can, Tangerine Dream, Eno, and King Crimson. Those bands threw all that pop song structure stuff out the window and it's very refreshing to hear music that isn't meant to be consumed in a way that a lot of other rock music is. But after a while I go back to the three minute pop song. As for new music, I haven't really heard a lot of bands that interest me.

Jason: There are some good new bands out there. You just have to dig deep to find them.

Reid: I do like the new Queens of the Stone Age record though.

PT: I really like the Hot Snakes. It isn't that new, but I still listen to it a lot.

MRR: Sorry to change the subject, but what are your thoughts about the upcoming U.S. war with Iraq?

Jason: What the fuck does that have to do with music? I'll answer it anyways. First off, killing another human being is the worst possible thing you can do. I don't really feel anything justifies killing someone. But this world has got itself in a vicious circle. One that would probably be avoided today if we had the chance to start over. It makes no sense whatsoever to be fighting over a world that shouldn't really belong to anyone. But realistically, it's to late. The lines have been drawn. Peace sounds great, but what would happen if we all threw hands up and said we aren't going to fight anymore? I think we would all be dead in five years from some asshole that has no value for human life. Are you willing to take that chance? I'm not so sure I am. So to answer your question, I have no idea how I feel about going to war, just like the other 90% of this country. I'm still trying to figure out an alternative.

Reid: I wouldn't support a war with Iraq at all. The US has already been starving people over there for a long time with the embargo and all. I think that killing more people in order to keep up the oil supply

for our excessive lifestyle is ridiculous. But I hope that there is room for a dissenting voice in the event of a war. Runaway nationalism is dangerous.

PT: I'm tired of being slaves for oil. Bush uses the excuse that he is searching for weapons, but North Korea has Nuclear weapons and he doesn't do shit about that. We have the resources for alternative sources of energy, so we should start using them!

MRR: What do you think Mike?

Mike: It bores the hell out of me and I don't see it really being worth my time to speak about, at least in any direct fashion. I don't watch the news or read the papers, but you better believe I'm concerned and that I'm vigilant in my beliefs against any type of military action ever.

MRR: Has being a father had an impact on the way you view problems in society, or in the world at large? I mean do you find yourself concerned about how the world will be in the future for your children and their kids?

Mike: Having kids hasn't impacted the way I view the world. Having them was, and is, a direct result of how I view life and the world at large. Of course like every parent, I'm concerned about the quality of life they will
have in this world as they grow older, but the growth of their souls is more important to me.

MRR: What's the last book everyone read?

Jason: For me it was *Lexicon Devil*, a biography on Darby Crash. After all this time I thought Darby was just a punk rock junky. It was a trip to read he was actually an extremely intelligent artistic person. You learn something new everyday.

PT: The last book I read was about the stock market. I can't remember the title, I read it when I was in school getting my finance degree.

Mike: Chaim Potok, *The Chosen*. It's a good book that has definitely affected me, and has encouraged me to stay true to myself and to continue to walk my path.

Reid: I read a book called *Survivors*, which dealt with POWs in the Vietnam War. I thought it was very interesting reading about the accounts of the prisoners and how their prison camp was just a clearing in the jungle. They had to find and cook their own food while fighting off disease and hoping to not get bombed by their own planes. The thing that really struck me was that all of these men didn't know a thing about Vietnam before they left for the war and didn't even know why they were going there. They also recalled that they didn't even know what communism was about. They just knew that they were supposed to be against it. While in the camp the VC officers made them take history classes about Vietnam's struggle and about communism and some of the prisoners even switched sides and took up arms against the US. It was a good book.

MRR: Minor Threat or Black Flag?

Mike: Black Flag, only because they were the first band I ever saw play live and the experience was so heavy and still resonates.

Reid: That's a difficult decision because Black Flag's music is much more varied and abundant than Minor Threat's. I like the musically adventurous spirit that Black Flag had, but their experiments were not always successful. If we were talking about baseball, Black Flag would have been a player who was good, had his ups and downs, and hung around too long. Thus, the baseball writers would've held a grudge when considering him for the Hall of Fame. Minor Threat would have been a good player who went out on top and the writers would've remembered him for it. So I would pick Minor Threat. They were solid throughout.

PT: Minor Threat. There were to many different eras of Black Flag and not all of them so good.

Jason: Black Flag.

MRR: The most over-rated band of all-time?

Jason: Turn on MTV, there is hundreds to choose from. But I will give you the most under-rated band of all time, I was thinking about this the other day: Bad Brains. If you are playing Hardcore music today, you owe your entire existence to Bad Brains, period.

Mike: I'm not a big fan of bands that have nothing to say, where musicianship alone is the driving force. Generally, these types of bands don't really do it for me.

Reid: I don't know. A lot of bands are overrated for different reasons. Sometimes because of their look or their politics. I don't know if other people feel this way, but I'm growing less and less fond of Rush by the day.

PT: I'd say the Eagles. I can't stand that shit.

MRR: Are their plans to do any major touring in the near future?

Mike: Well, at this point everyone's got day jobs but sooner or later we will throw caution to the wind, and do an extensive tour. In the skateboard world I've already established that I'm a touring machine and I would like to set the same bar with this band at some point.

Jason: We are doing a short trip with CKY in February. Other than that, nothing is solid.

MRR: What about any upcoming recording plans for the Rats?

Jason: We are in the studio now recording songs for a compilation on Sessions Records. We are also recording songs for the soundtrack to Mike's new video *Greatest Hits*.

MRR: Alright, last question. Would you consider yourselves completely "free" human beings?

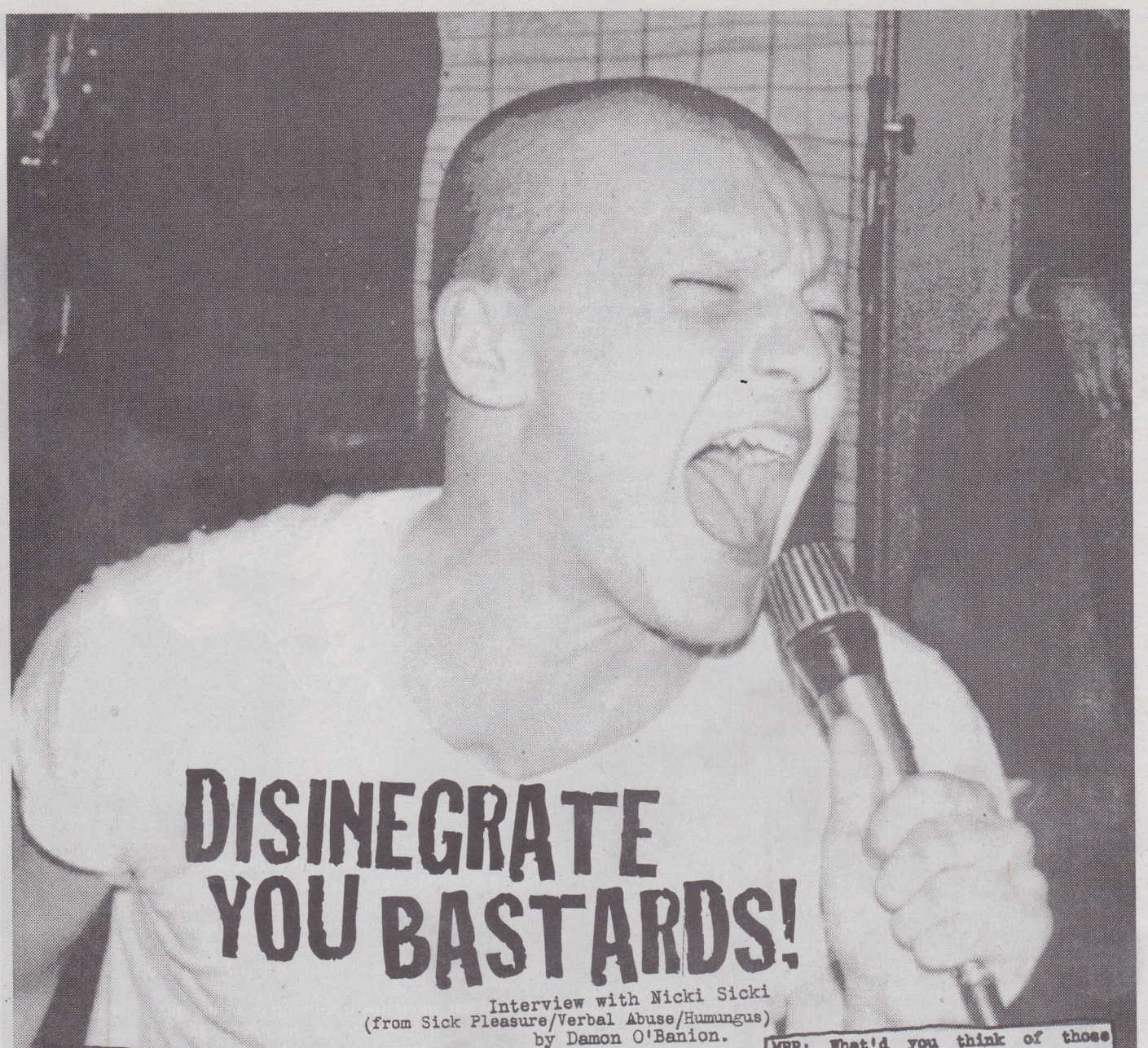
PT: Taking the word literally, I don't think anyone is free. The statement, "There is no such thing as a free lunch", implies there is a cost, whether it is monetary or not, for everything someone does.

Jason: If you're referring to the true definition of the word freedom, none of us are completely free, and odds are we never will be. But I feel freedom is a state of mind, and in that sense of the word, yes, I feel free.

Reid: No, because in order to live I have to obtain food, clothing and shelter. Human life at its most basic is devoted to these things. Animals themselves are not free either because they spend even more time than we do searching for food. Instead of wandering around looking for food, we have money that can be exchanged for goods and services. So we compete to get work to get money to get the things we need to survive.

Mike: To me freedom is solely a state of mind that is not controlled by environment. I try to be conscious of every moment, thus I'm free to learn and grow.

www.mikevandtherats.com



DISINEGRATE YOU BASTARDS!

Interview with Nicki Sicki
(from Sick Pleasure/Verbal Abuse/Humungus)
by Damon O'Banion.

MRR: So, Nicki, where ya been?
Nicki: Well, ha ha, I've been in prison for the last few years. Other than that, I've been uh-the last couple of months I've been everywhere.
MRR: So tell us why you were there.
Nicki: Well, methamphetamine-another drug charge. Haaaa, third time.

MRR: Why don't you tell us a little bit about-it's your third time? Must have been a little scary.
Nicki: Yeah, well, they tried to offer me 25 to life, but everybody that I know came through for me and helped me out and got me a lawyer and got me outta there. A lot of bands I don't even know did benefits for me.

MRR: You remember some of those bands?
Nicki: Well, lets see...Verbal Abuse, Dystopia, Noothgrush, Drunken Thunder. I don't remember a whole lot of 'em. Who else played on that PC show? Drunk Horse the Drunks, (laughter) all my friends are a little fucked up. (more laughter)

MRR: So, now that you're out, have you played any shows?
Nicki: I got out on a Friday afternoon, we played Saturday night in Austin and we played in Houston, that's with Humungus. Austin went real well.
MRR: Who'd you play with?
Nicki: The Krum Bums, the Bulemics and Nigel Peppercock.

MRR: What'd you think of those bands?
Nicki: All three bands rock. It was a good show. Nigel Peppercock is one out-there band.
MRR: You had an opportunity to sing with the Bulemics.
Nicki: Yeah, we played "Three Seconds of Pleasure."
MRR: So, tell *Maximum Rocknroll* readers what releases to expect this year-some re-releases.
Nicki: The original Verbal Abuse album is being re-released with about 15 live tracks added to it. The live tracks were taken from the Ritz in New York during a show with the Ramones. Then Beer City's also putting out the new Humungus record, *I Hate Mother Fucking Cops*, which has Cheetah Chrome playing guitar on it from the Dead Boys, with the first album, *..A Reason To Care* as bonus tracks. So it will have both albums on one CD.

MRR: Sick Pleasure?

Nicki: Well, Sick Pleasure's supposed to be putting together all the songs onto one CD or something and be putting it out, but that's still a little ways down the road. Mike's working on it right now. There'll probably definitely be some Sick Pleasure shows before the end of the year. At least out in San Francisco, I know that much

MRR: Aren't you uh waiting to hear whether or not you are going to be assigned a leg monitor-waiting to see when those shows will…

Nicki: Yeah, that's kind of putting a damper on things right now 'cause part of my parole plan was getting the leg monitor 90 days or however long they're gonna stick it on me. I've been out three months and they still haven't put it on me so every month is like-I keep thinking, "Well, this month I'm gonna get it," so I don't really make any plans to do anything but hopefully-I'm like ready for 'em to do it. Hopefully they'll do it soon so that I can get it over with.

MRR: Why don't you tell MRR readers a little bit about what got you into punk rock?

Nicki: Well, what got me into punk rock, I guess, was the Stooges and Dead Boys and stuff. My first band was in the late 70s: Legionnaire's Disease.

MRR: That was the Houston band?

Nicki: That was the Houston band, except I never played with 'em in Houston. They were getting ready to go on tour and their bass player cut his thumb just about off and they needed a bass player to fill in and I knew every one of their songs at that point so I just jumped in the truck and ran away from home. I was fourten or fifteen years old. Went to California with them and then everybody's so strung out it just broke up out there. I was like a little kid, but they were all way older than me and so I just stayed in San Francisco and that's how I ran into Mike Fox and then started up with Sick Pleasure.

MRR: Tell us how that started.

Nicki: I was just hanging out at the Mabuhay Gardens and Mike Fox came up to me and I never even sang in a band before, well actually no, that's not true, I was singing with Social Insect, and we'd done a couple shows. That was just a throwaway band. Me and Bob Noxious from the Fuck-Ups playing drums and Ricky on bass and, uh, but Mike just came up to me and said "Dude, I want you to be the singer of my band." I'm like, "OK." And went down there and that was it. At the end of the month it worked.

MRR: Were you writing before you became a singer?

Nicki: Well I've always been writing lyrics, I mean, ever since I was just a little teeny kid, I mean, but even when I went to go join Sick Pleasure I had a notebook of like a 100 or 200 hundred songs that I'd been writing since I was like twelve years old-before I even knew what punk rock was. Half those songs from Sick Pleasure came from that notebook. And in fact, every song from Sick Pleasure came from that notebook.

MRR: Take us from Sick Pleasure to Verbal Abuse.

Nicki: Well, I was with Sherry back then and she had a kid. We were pretty fuckin' high on speed and it just didn't seem… I just felt like I needed to go somewhere with that kid. I mean we couldn't stay in San Francisco and keep doing what we were doing and have a kid there. So we split. We only stayed gone about a year or so and then her parents ended up taking the kid, which was the best thing. I went back to Texas after that and started Verbal Abuse.

MRR: Who was in the band?

Nicki: Originally it was these two brothers, Radie and G.E. We played for quite a while and then G.E. found religion and decided that I was evil, so he quit the band and somehow Radie knew Joie from somewhere, and just had him come up from Harlingen to come try out. And he worked out. And Brett didn't join the band until Verbal Abuse went to California. Matter of fact, I didn't even know he was comin' until the band showed up and they had Brett with them. At that point I still thought Radie was coming to California, but somehow Joie just found a new bass player on the way to California.

MRR: What motivated Verbal Abuse to go back out to California? Didn't some pretty amazing punk bands decide to do the same thing-head west from Texas?

Nicki: I'd already been out in California with Sick Pleasure. I knew that there was a much better scene, but when Verbal Abuse showed up, I didn't realize how well the scene had grown. I mean, I didn't want to come back, but we did, and we came back with the Dicks, M.D.C and D.R.I,, all four bands, the Texas Hell shows.

MRR: All those bands ended up in California?

Nicki: Not one band came back afterwards. Every band got to California and stayed.

MRR: Verbal Abuse recorded *American Band*. You then hit the road…

Nicki: Yeah. We spent about four months on the road. Damn near played with everybody I can think of. I mean SNFU, the Ramones, Decry, Poison Idea, Agnostic Front, Reagan Youth, Die Kruezen, and tons more…

MRR: ..Slayer.

Nicki: ..Slayer. Played with Slayer in Canada. That was a strange one. We played a titty bar in Canada with Slayer

MRR: You ended up on their *Hell Awaits* album sleeve, right?

Nicki: Yeah. They thanked us and put my picture on their album. A decade later they end up doing five Verbal Abuse songs on their *Undisputed Attitude* album. Which is the most money I've ever made from my music, and I didn't even do it. Ha!

MRR: So when did you decide that Verbal Abuse wasn't fun anymore?

Nicki: Well, when we were out on the road a lot, I mean when Verbal Abuse started, when Joie joined the band, all the songs were already written. The first album was already written. I had written just about everything on there, and then once Joie joined the band he could play all of that, but that's not what he would write. He started like getting really into that glam kinda'-I don't know, almost like Guns N Roses type stuff, and it was just easier to quit the band than it was to try to change the way the tide was going. I mean, you could see by the next album the way they were starting to sound. It wasn't nothing like the first album. We got back from tour and it was time to sit down and write some new songs because we already pretty much tore it out with the old album, and I just didn't want to write songs with Joie. I mean, it was just not the kind of music I wanted to do. I mean, hats off to 'em, they kept it going, y'know, but it wasn't my thing. I just didn't want to sound like that.

MRR: So how long did it take you to pick up another band?

Nicki: Well, I went straight back to Houston and got together with Andy Shuman. We started up with Afterbirth pretty much right away. Afterbirth never did record anything, but it was one of my favorite bands. Got a little demo tape out, but that's about it. We were together for a few years, I don't know why we never bothered to record. We were in Houston. I guess that's about the explanation.

MRR: Ironically, Andy Schuman ended up as a guitar player for Verbal Abuse.

Nicki: Yeah, that was like the closest thing to original member was being able to say I played in a band with Nicki some other time.

MRR: Well, I mean, Afterbirth kicked it around for a few years in Houston, played some really good shows…

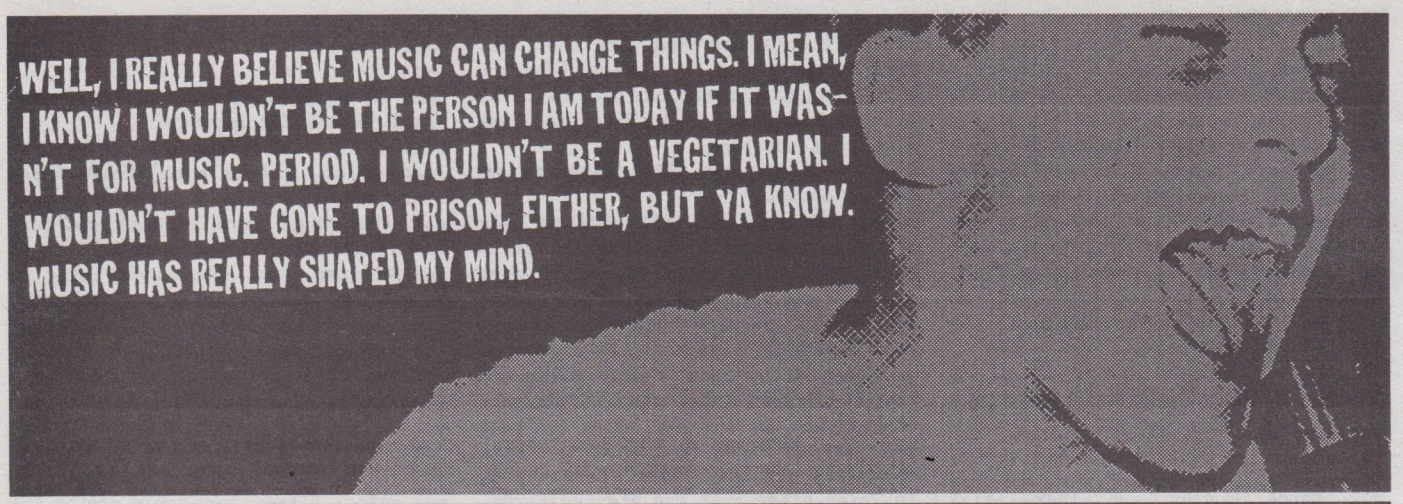
Nicki: We went through several line-ups…

MRR: Then you decided to move but Afterbirth kinda-what happened Afterbirth?

Nicki: Well, we went out to California and then Andy wanted-hooked up with Verbal Abuse. I went back to Houston, kinda reform Afterbirth again and then I don't know everybody just kind of…that band just kind of drifted apart. It wasn't like there like was some great reason why that band broke up. Everybody just kind of drifted apart. And somehow, I don't even know how, I ended up in Virginia, but I ended up in Virginia and with the band Dirtbag.

MRR: Dirtbag was one of your favorite bands…

Nicki: Yeah, probably my favorite-I



have to say they're probably one of my favorite bands I've ever done.

MRR: Nothing released, nothing recorded.

Nicki: Nothing. Nothing. And Sid totally, the guitarist, did not know shit about punk rock, which made it so good, I mean, a guy like who could play like classical acoustic guitar, but he didn't know shit about punk rock so he was just bashing, he would just play, I mean, but he like had like totally original like ways of playing everything. It was really good.

MRR: Talk a little bit about the scene up in Virginia and some of the shows that you played.

Nicki: Well, there was really never a scene in Virginia, but it was really easy to get to anywhere. Ya know, within four or five hours you were in everywhere from New York to Florida, ya know, you could travel around real easy up there on the East coast. But as far as where we lived, there was no scene. I mean, there was one club. The only other band that we ever played with locally was Sewer Puppet, which was Kirk from Buzz-oven and his band, and usually every other weekend was either we went down and played with them in North Carolina or they came up played in Virginia with us.

MRR: Well, once again, great band, good shows, but you decide to come back home to Texas.

Nicki: Yeah. I was just out in Texas for the summer and ran into Joe Dead and...

MRR: Sick Mentality...

Nicki: Sick Mentality just broke up and Joe wanted to do something. We jammed for the summer and it just stuck. I mean, I've really enjoyed playing with Joe and shit, I've been playing with him eight years, nine years-fuck I don't even know how many years. I've been playing with him a long time and, I mean, we've been through half a dozen bass players and drummers but Joe Dead's been more faithful than a girlfriend. Man, he's waited for me every time I went to prison, he's been there when I get out, ready to play. We recorded an album back-six years ago-and Humungus is kind of spread out on a time line because I keep going to prison-I've been to prison twice during Humungus. Once for two years, once for two and a half years, so, it's kinda slowed the ball down a little bit, but last time I was out, we got Cheetah Chrome up playing guitar from the Dead Boys, and recorded the new album and he was originally coming up here to play one song but, ended up staying on the couch for like a year.

MRR: Let's back up a little bit. You guys recorded your first Humungus album around 1990, *...A Reason to Care*, released on Scratched Records.

Nicki: Right.

MRR: On vinyl and CD. Humungus kept playing, wrote new songs. A year or two goes by and your asked to play at CMJ in New York. This is where Cheetah comes into the picture. Tell us a little bit about how you found him.

Nicki: I was listening to the Dead Boys CD and I was telling Joe after we were getting off the plane, I was like "I really wanna do Ain't It Fun on the next record." Joe was wondering how I would do it -with all the singing instead of screaming, but he was into it. I wasn't off the plane but about two hours and walking down the street and there was Cheetah standing in the methadone line. He was just like, "Gimme a plane ticket and I'll come down and play on the record, too." It wasn't three or four weeks after that, we flew him down to Houston-the guys from Sound Virus actually paid for his ticket - he was gonna play on the one song but he ended up just staying in the house and joining the band. He only plays on eight songs or something like that, I think? We recorded a bunch of Dead Boys songs, too. We might release that as a single or something just as a "that was then, this is now" or something like that. One of the songs on the *I Hate Motherfucking Cops* is the last Dead Boy song that they wrote that they never got to record, but it's got my lyrics on it 'cause Cheetah couldn't remember the lyrics that went with it. Its the music, the music is the last Dead Boy song, it's called "Freedom Does Not Exist."

MRR: How do some of the verses go?

Nicki: "You're not free, it's a lie/ You're not free until you die/ Freedom's what they call it when you're doin' what they say/Follow all the rules they make or there's a price to pay/Do it long enough you might forget that you're a slave/But you're not really free until you're laying in your grave"

MRR: You believe that?

Nicki: Oh, yeah. I mean, there's no freedom in the United States. Hell, if I was free, I wouldn'ta been to prison. It's not like I did something to somebody.

MRR: So the album's called *I Hate Mother Fucking Cops*. It's in stores now, or available by order from Beer City. It also contains tracks from the first album, *...A Reason To Care*.

Nicki: Right.

MRR: You're a vegetarian.

Nicki: I'm a vegetarian. I believe heavily in animal rights. Don't really preach it too much even though we do have some songs on the new album that are about animal rights.

MRR: Are you a menace?

Nicki: No, not to society. Maybe to myself sometimes, but that's about it.

MRR: So, that said, brings us to the current state. You're free now, what's next?

Nicki: Well, I'm gonna stay free this time. I have to tell you, I'm really sick of prison. It ain't like nothing that you read in books or magazines or nothing like that. It's not as bad as you probably think it is sometimes and it's not as good as you think it is sometimes. It's somewhere falls-falls somewhere in between but it always is never what you want to be.

MRR: Want to stay in Texas, or is it time to move back to California?

Nicki: Well, I want to go back to California, but I got three years of parole to do, so I gotta figure out how to get my parole transferred out there and that's gonna take a little

bit of time. Until I get everything transferred, I'll probably stay up in Austin most of the time or something. There's not much going on in Houston. For the third biggest city in the United States, it sure is a sad place to live.

MRR:Do you think that we can change some of the things that…

Nicki: Well, I really believe music can change things. I mean, I know I wouldn't be the person I am today if it wasn't for music. Period. I wouldn't be a vegetarian. I wouldn't have gone to prison, either, but ya know. Music has really shaped my mind. I've met a couple of people who've said "Well, I've quit eating meat because of your band, I've done this…" even if it only changes one person, that's enough.

MRR: You've managed to hang onto your record collection. You're building a new one.

Nicki: Yeah.

MRR: What are some of your favorite bands now?

Nicki: My favorite bands *now*. Well, I'd say Dystopia. I'd have to say Blood for Blood has the most beautiful lyrics ever. I really like the Krum Bums, a local Austin band here, uh, I haven't had a chance to see a whole lot of new music. Like, I've only been out for three months this time, but, I still listen to all my old favorites, too: the Dicks, the Cro Mags.

MRR: Well said. Where is Nicki Sicki in five years?

Nicki: Not in prison. Hopefully I'll be back in the Bay Area by then, goddamn. Um, still playing music, man. I mean, I'm getting old, but I ain't gonna quit.

MRR: Is there anything that you're writing now that is different than what you wrote five years ago?

Nicki: Oh, sure. My lyrics are a lot more well thought-out now than they've ever been. The lyrics have always been angry and full of hate, but they're a lot more…I can put my finger on who I hate a lot better now than I could before.

MRR: Prison is an environment that breeds hate.

Nicki: Yeah, yeah.

MRR: How'd you get through it?

Nicki: Well, you just do. Everybody, I mean, anybody goes to prison's gonna get through it. Either that or you're gonna die there, but, you're gonna get through it. You learn to stay alone. You really don't want a whole lot of friends in prison. It just causes you trouble.

MRR: Nicki, are you an anarchist? Or are you an American?

Nicki: Well, I don't consider myself American, that's for sure. I mean, except for maybe on my prison records or something, but uh. I really don't say that I'm an anarchist either. I don't really know what I am. I'm just me. I just think we should all be left alone. That's really all I ever wanted out of life, is just to be left alone and to be able to do what I wanna do.

MRR: So, let's talk a little bit more about prison. Did you find anybody in prison like yourself?

Nicki: Almost everybody I met that even knew about decent music were the white-power knuckleheads. The people I would run around with didn't have anything to do with music. They were just regular ol' guys.

MRR: You went through some tough times while you were locked up. You lost your dad, you lost your dog, you lost your mom…

Nicki: Yeah, I almost wanted to give up there for a little while. Everybody that I was caring about was dying. But it took me a while to get out and realize that I've still got a lot of people out here.

MRR: What advice would you give to someone that's reading this right now, locked up, troubled-suffering-how do you get through it?

Nicki: Just hunker down. You just gotta go through the days. More days you go through, the less it bothers you.

MRR: Anything good come out of that experience?

Nicki: Well, it's definitely helping me stay out of prison, I guess is the way I would say it. I don't wanna give anybody the wrong idea. I'm not trying to be some angel. I'm not even trying to be sober. I'm definitely not doing things that are gonna put me back in prison. Some people still say that anything I do is gonna put me back in prison, but they're not gonna come kick my door in for what I'm doing now, ya know? You've got to try to hang on to and remember why 'cause it's real easy a couple months after you get out to just forget that you were ever there. Because you don't want to think about it.

MRR: That's really important, I think. The reason why people go back and there's a lot of different, you know…

Nicki: Hell, I went back three times, so…

MRR: It wasn't because you wanted to.

Nicki: No…Wasn't 'cause I was too bright, either, but…

MRR: Well, unfortunately there are people out there that get used to that life, and don't know how to deal when they get out. But you seem to have adjusted well, happy that you're out…

Nicki: I've always been able to adjust to almost anything. Sad to say, I adjusted to prison pretty much when I got there, too, and I can get through anything-I know that.

MRR: Dee Dee Ramone died recently , Joey Ramone died not too long ago. Give us a good Ramones story.

Nicki: Well, the Ramones and Verbal Abuse never quite got along 'cause when they came out to the Bay area, it was after they did that Phil Specter album, Bam Music got us, Verbal Abuse, to interview 'em. And like the first question was, "So why did you guys sell out?" and that was like the nicest thing we said. I mean it was just…we just kinda talked down to 'em. They called it "Ramones Get Abused." And uh, we got up to New York, matter of fact, for the live show where on the new Verbal Abuse album comes from, we were playing with them and they walked in and they weren't very happy with it. We go on and we play and we come off the stage and they had roped off the backstage where their side had like a buffet, drinks, champagne coming out of those little tiers and everything. And our side had four folding chairs on the other side of the velvet rope, and that was it. So, we were sitting there on our little side and Matt Dillon, the actor, came back and was talking to us and said, "What the fuck's going on with your side of the…I mean, why are you guys banned over here?" And we told him the little story about the Ramones. I guess the Ramones were courting him right then to get their music on one of his movies. And he was like, "Man, they ain't gonna say nuthin' to me" and he drug their buffet table over to our side, and some of the champagne and everything. We were sitting there with like three drinks in every hand when the Ramones came back, and they saw him sitting there with us. And they huddled up and they talked and they sent the bouncer over there to take down the rope and were like, "We're sorry, this wasn't supposed to be here." Oh well…

MRR: Verbal Abuse was about to go on tour -that first show, you got knocked out?

Nicki: Oh yeah. That was Poison Idea. All I got out was "Verbal Abuse, One, two, three, four…" That was the end of that one. They had to take me to the hospital. By the time we got finished with that tour I had like eight or nine hospital arm bands all up one arm. I don't really know how I used to do it, either, I mean it just would happen. At one point I had a cast on my arm, and a Dixie cup with a rubber tube coming out of the top of my head and a splint on my nose. That was when we got to New York. We got caught up in some riot with skinheads in St. Louis. That's where I got my arm broken. I don't know *who* put that bill together, but it was Samhain, Verbal Abuse, and White Pride. I never seen three bands that never should have played together more than those three. With three completely different crowds. By the time we started playing, chairs were flying, it was just crazy.

MRR: What kind of advice would you have for a punk rock band out there that's just starting? Thinking about going on the road, thinking about doing this for a living?

Nicki: Well, don't think about doing it for a living. Think asbout living for *it*-that's more like it. If you're thinking about doing it for a living, you're chasing the wrong tail there. Don't sell drugs. Stay out of prison. It really fucks up your fucking music when you're in prison.

BIGAMISTS

One tasty record that has remained a mystery to me, even in my advanced stages of collectordom, is the Bigamists single from Salt Lake City, UT. It's two tracks, "Wifey" and "Sniffin' the Sacred Undergarment", issued on their own Tabernacle Records, are truly great Ramonesy punk gems, but a small pressing quantity and lack of any information has puzzled collectors for years. My pal Jen recently relocated to the Mormon city and accidentally broke the case when her date asked for her to be his wifey. She was kind enough to put me in touch with the lead vocalist Gordon H. Young, a direct descendant of Brigham. Gordon took the liberty of forwarding our interview (conducted via email) to Bigamists drummer Jack Lowery, who replied back to me with even more information.

Interview by Fahad Nabhan.

...we got bored and tired with all the choir crap.

We used to just take off and smoke a bowl. At one point, someone brought a jambox and was playing the Ramones.

We all decided *that's* what we should be doing.

It all made perfect sense especially when we were all completely baked....

MRR: First of all, what's the meaning behind the name Bigamists?

Gordon: Obviously we were trying to be controversial being in Utah and all. It helped that our drummer Jack's father actually WAS a bigamist with 4 wives. Not only that, each wife was a different nationality! One was American Indian, one Chinese, one African, and one Guatemalan. The Chinese wife was one of the people killed by a bomb planted by Mark Hofmann, the infamous forger of rare Mormon church documents.

Jack: I always thought it was because we liked big tits. Like watermelon tits, man.

MRR: Would you give a brief history of the band, like members, period of existence, etc?

Gordon: It's pretty simple... we all tried out for the Tabernacle choir as kids and all of us were rejected. All the reject kids wind up in local community choirs. That's where we first met. We got bored and tired with all the choir crap. We used to just take off and smoke a bowl. At one point, someone brought a jambox and was playing the Ramones. We all decided *that's* what we should be doing. It all made perfect sense especially when we were all completely baked. As a "band", we lasted less than a year. Late late 1978 through mid 1979. We were a three-piece. I'm still in touch with Jack. He's a manager at the busiest Denny's in Salt Lake City. The other member Chino was killed back in '85 at a fireworks display in Kanab, Utah. All the fireworks accidentally got set off at once. He was one of five people killed.

Jack: May Chino rest in peace in the hands of the Lord.

MRR: As the band is still very obscure and even lots of Utahans can't recall things, it was supposed that the group was just a studio project made up by the Mormon Church to jump on the punk band-wagon.

Gordon: No, the church HATED us. We actually only played two gigs ever, but the second and last one was at a Mormon family picnic. Actual fistfights almost broke out between our parents (who had a sense of humor and took our band for what it was, mainly a joke) and people who found it morally offensive.

Jack: Gordon and I have always disagreed about this one. He says we were a joke, but as the Lord is my witness, there is nothing funny about punk rock.

MRR: You released the single on your own Tabernacle records.

Gordon: Yeah. We recorded it at a local studio that mostly did commercial jingles. We pressed up 200 and sold maybe 5 at the time. The rest we gave away. I got a call from a guy in Whippany, New Jersey a few months ago who claimed lots of punk collectors were looking for it. I managed to dig up one copy for him. He sent me some CD-R's and a rare sock monkey I'd been looking for. I collect folk art, and I have over 75 sock monkeys, all different people. Some are almost 100 years old.

MRR: What were your songs about?

Gordon: Well, "Wifey" was about Jack's father specifically, but more reflective of the city we lived in. "Sniffin'" was, well, Chino wrote that one to get back at me. We had the songs rehearsed, and were ready to go, but the night before recording we got into a big fight— I don't remember what about, that's all lost to time. Anyway, after he went home, he wrote these lyrics about how I used to sniff my sister's panties. At the time it was my darkest secret and I was furious when he sang the song. I wanted to make him redo the vocals, but we didn't have enough money for more studio time. In retrospect, the event actually helped me come to terms with certain aspects of my sexuality, which I now embrace.

Jack: Chino was in the booth doing vocals and Gordon and I were sitting around drinking coffee, which was actually quite taboo in our town, watching him. Gordon darn near choked to death when the first line came out.

MRR: Since the music is very very detailed and well arranged, it seems you did rehearse often before going into the studio, or just happened to be excellent musicians before The Bigamists.

Gordon: Well, I'm flattered, but we weren't that good. All of us were forced into musical training (piano, violin, etc.) as kids. It's practically required by the Latter Day Saints.

Jack: These days I've gotten back into playing some music, mostly because my children have formed an orchestra together. They want their old man to be the conductor, so I've been taking conducting lessons on my day off from Denny's. Maybe Tabernacle Records will have a second release someday.

MRR: Do You remember a particular magazine or distributor who recognized the potential in the band or on the single?

Gordon: Hell no. Nobody gave a shit... actually we barely cared either. We were just bored and high and liked the Ramones. Typical teenager stuff.

Jack: Amen.

MRR: Why does the single lack proper infos, lyrics and photos. Was that made intentionally?

Gordon: We couldn't afford a sleeve. We did make a few photocopied ones to give to our friends—all 12 of them! Ha! Ha! I'm not sure what proper infos were needed other than song titles, though. Anyway, we were probably too baked to come up with anything else. The pressing plant did all the typesetting.

MRR: Thanks for finding time to do this and even more thanks for what you did 20 years ago (no matter how pathetic this may sound).

Gordon: Thank you. With your help, maybe our popularity will increase in places like Singapore and Bavaria and Venice and New Jersey. I'm told there might be interest in our three unreleased songs.

Jack: God Bless Maximum Rocknroll!

...In retrospect, the event actually helped me come to terms with certain aspects of my sexuality, which I now embrace.

FROM THE FRONT LINES OF THE DRUG WAR AND GLOBALIZATION: 25 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT BOLIVIA

Events in Bolivia over the last 10 years are an excellent illustration of how much impact policies carried out by the United States can have on foreign countries without the US population knowing a thing about it. Recent media favorites in Latin America include Mexico (a US neighbor and member of NAFTA), Colombia (a site of counterinsurgency warfare), and Brazil and Argentina (regional giants facing economic ruin). Other hotspots get the headlines, but what's happening in Bolivia is an important story: it shows the callousness and corruption of US power, and that grassroots activism can score imperfect but impressive victories against mighty odds.

BY LANE VAN HAM

HISTORY

1. The history of the country could well be written as an account of foreign powers and what resources they sought to extract for their own benefit. Beginning in the mid-1500s and continuing for three centuries, Spain plundered Bolivian silver mines. The country achieved political independence in 1825, but exploitation continued in new forms with the rise of transnational capitalism. In the 1960s, for example, the Dutch company Phillips Industries clinched a deal that enabled them to mine zinc at less than 1.5% of its actual value. The United States government worked in various ways to ensure the piracy would continue, and US banks consistently turned down loan requests to develop Bolivian oil fields until the state petroleum company arranged a generous deal with the Gulf Corporation.

2. The country was under military rule almost continuously in the 1960s and 70s. The power of the armed forces was curbed somewhat during the mid-century, but reemerged stronger than ever with a coup in 1964. Over the next 18 years, there would be a series of 10 military dictatorships, including that of General Hugo Banzer (1971-8). An Argentinean judge is seeking Banzer's extradition on the grounds that he aided Operation Condor, a campaign of political murders orchestrated by right-wing South American governments in the 1970s.

3. Bolivia is where Che Guevara was killed in 1967, a task in which the United States participated. Guevara came to Bolivia hoping to spread the success of the Cuban revolution to other parts of Latin America. His attempts to organize a guerrilla army in the Andes, however, were disastrous: the rebels failed to recruit even one peasant to join them. By the end, a meager band of some 20 guerrillas were encircled by thousands of government troops. Bolivian authorities initially announced that Guevara had been killed in combat; in fact, he was wounded, captured, interrogated and executed. The military units involved were trained and accompanied by US Green Berets, and a CIA agent participated in his interrogation.

4. Bolivia is the poorest country in South America; it is the second poorest in the hemisphere (after Haiti). This poverty makes the country especially needy of foreign assistance, particularly that of the US. But such aid is a Faustian deal—the money comes with strings attached, on the US's terms. In order to keep a steady flow of money, Bolivia has to put its own needs on the back burner and favor the priorities of Uncle Sam.

THE DRUG WAR

5. When the military gave up power in 1982, it came during the worst economic crisis in Bolivian history. Interest rates on the country's enormous debt went up, and inflation went as high as 24,000%. Additional blows came in 1985, when the market for tin collapsed, and the following

year, when natural gas prices went down. In 1985, the government accepted the terms of an International Monetary Fund (IMF) stabilization plan, devaluing the currency, cutting social welfare subsidies, and selling off state-owned businesses. Champions of neo-liberal economics gave the plan credit for a number of improvements toward the decade's end. However, this conceals a more likely story, which is that the economy was helped by a massive influx of money from something else that was happening in Bolivia at the same time: the rise of cocaine cultivation.

6. The foundation of the Bolivian drug industry was laid while the country was under military rule. In the 1960s, Bolivian authorities began to encourage peasant migration to the semitropical region called Chapare, hoping the land would be suitable for agriculture. But the experiment turned out poorly for a number of reasons, and with the 70s coca boom, Chapare farmers increasingly turned to coca cultivation as a means of survival. Coca was a long-standing staple of Bolivian agriculture, a plant that was legally grown and consumed as a mild stimulant. It was especially well-suited to the dire conditions of Chapare, though, because it has low start-up costs, grows in poor soil, and is easy to transport for sale. Meanwhile, the military government was providing loans for agribusiness elites so they could set themselves up in the fledgling cocaine processing industry.

7. Drug money was the Bolivian government's secret ingredient in stabilizing the national economy. Though civilian rulers were less directly tied to cocaine than their military predecessors, they continued in subtle ways to aid development of the country's most successful export. In previous years, industry bosses had found it safer to keep their profits in Caribbean accounts. But the new government passed a series of legislation giving a wink and a nod to drug traffickers by doing such things as eliminating investigations into the origin of money coming into the country. The drug money came home to Bolivian banks and played a crucial role in bolstering the national economy.

8. In the 1980s, US officials found the drug war a useful technique for maintaining a US military role in Latin America. This was especially true of the cocaine-producing countries in the Andes Mountains: Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia. In Bolivia in particular, US forces provided training for the anti-narcotics police Mobile Rural Patrol Unit (UMOPAR). They also worked with UMOPAR for Operation Blast Furnace in 1986, providing six Black Hawk helicopters and 160 troops for a series of raids on coca processing facilities in the jungle

9. When the role of the United States in Blast Furnace met widespread criticism, US and Bolivian authorities turned to lower-profile operations. Many in Bolivia were outraged that foreign troops had been allowed into the country without congressional approval—something expressly forbidden by the constitution. The follow-up to Blast Furnace, Operation Snow Cap, was more sustained, and removed direct US military participation, using instead members of the US Coast Guard, Border Patrol, Drug Enforcement Agency, and State Department.

10. The failure of Operation Snow Cap led to government-backed crop eradication. Despite scoring a few successes, Snow Cap was unable to cause serious damage to the drug industry. Starting in 1988, the Bolivian government began a domestic strategy of enticing farmers to abandon coca in favor of other cash crops. In 1997, ex-dictator Hugo Banzer was elected president, the following year, Banzer launched Plan Dignidad ("Plan Dignity"), a policy whereby the military were sent to forcibly remove planted coca.

POPULAR PROTEST

11. Among the most significant social organizations in Bolivia are those of the coca farmers, or "cocaleros." For the cocaleros, it is obvious that a decade and a half of government efforts to reduce coca cultivation have failed. In many cases,

the government has not kept its promises to help with alternative development; many who have tried the programs have found that they do not make enough money to live on. Since the late 1990s, cocalero organizations have taken an active role in fighting government eradication efforts.

12. In recent years, Bolivian grassroots organizations have forged broad-based civic alliances to oppose the government's neo-liberal economic plan. The alliances have brought together cocaleros, non-coca-growing farmers, indigenous groups, university students, and urban workers including teachers, medical employees, and the police. Despite tensions among participant organizations, there have also been a number of sustained, large-scale actions challenging state policy.

13. In 1995, the government declared a state of siege, which lasted six months. Every year, the United States government "certifies" countries for foreign aid hased on their compliance with US-shaped anti-drug policy. The US certified Bolivia in 1995 on the condition that it would eradicate a certain amount of coca cultivation. After widespread popular protest, the government declared a state of siege, under which meetings were banned and many grassroots leaders were arrested.

14. In Apri 2000, the government responded to a new wave of protest by declaring a state of siege again. This time, the central issue was one common in countries subject to "structural adjustment" programs—taking state owned services and selling them off. A subsidiary of the transnational corporation Bechtel bought the water rights in the city of Cochambamba and raised prices as high as 35%. During the same period, the country's major campesino union organized highway roadblocks to call attention to rural poverty and protest the forced eradication of coca. President Banzer sent in the armed forces, with violent consequences: during the two week state of siege, the military killed six, wounded dozens more, and tortured younger demonstrators in order to get information about movement leaders. The crackdown failed. In the end, the government had to negotiate with the campesinos to re-open the highways, and canceled the water contract.

15. Mass, coordinated actions by various organizations in September and October, 2000 testified once again to the strength of Bolivia's political grassroots, but also revealed rifts among cocaleros and other groups. Among those involved were cocaleros angered by Plan Dignidad, campesinos calling for land reform, public school teachers on strike, and students demanding a university budget increase. Protesters combined to block roads in rural areas and marched in cities. Again, the state responded with violence, even after negotiations had begun. Ten people died, most of them protesters killed by the military. The crisis dissolved when several sectors separated their demands from those of the cocaleros and came to terms with the government; the cocaleros eventually negotiated an agreement as well, though they failed to win an end to forced eradication.

16. In April 2001, a broad-based grassroots alliance mobilized to call for an end to neo-liberal economic policy. A mass march from Cochabamba to La Paz by an alliance of various sectors known as the Only National Coordinating Committee of Mobilizations (COMUNAL). Among the demands: ending forced eradication, implementing agrarian reform, a cessation in the privatization of state enterprises, and a suspension of foreign debt payments. Police harassed the march, infiltrating it, attacking it on four occasions with tear gas, and arresting several dozen participants who were later released without charges. At the same time, teachers in La Paz were striking, as were employees in the national hospital system. The day after the march reached La Paz, transport workers held a 24-hour, nationwide strike. When the government announced it would not negotiate with the cocaleros, the cocaleros returned home and set up roadblocks, labor leaders began plans for a nationwide general strike. The crisis was averted when the government reversed itself and announced it would engage in dialogue with the cocaleros and also reached an agreement with the workers council.

17. In the summer and fall of 2001, cocaleros started to assert themselves more strongly against forced eradication by the military. Coca farmers began blocking military access to areas slated for eradication, and security forces killed several demonstrators. Cocalero groups announced they would launch a new round of highway blockades, and the government responded by sending 2,000 soldiers and police into Chapare, on November 15, government forces fired at people trying to bJock a road, and killed three. A round of negotiations reduced tensions, but the talks broke down when the government resumed forced eradication at the urging of the United States. Public opposition and government violence resumed as well: on December 6, while the Bolivian President was in Washington D.C. to discuss trade and anti-drug policy with George W. Bush, security forces tear-gassed and shot members of a peaceful cocalero protest.

18. In January, 2002, the government escalated eradication efforts by banning the sale of coca for traditional consumption (not cocaine processing) in Chapare. Troops shut down previously legal markets, and cocaleros responded by rioting; four security personnel were kidnapped and killed. A protest march in Cochabamba drew in participants from urban workers' groups, university students, teachers, anti-water-privatization activists, and others. The government eventually suspended the plan to criminalize the previously legal coca market sites, first for 90 days, and then for the remainder of the presidential administration's term (which ended this past August). US officials criticized the government's move as compromising drug war efforts.

STATE REPRESSION

19. Forced eradication has set off a spiral of violence in which sectors of the Bolivian police and military have been the primary perpetrators. In recent years, cocalero self-defense organizations have carried out numerous acts of violence, including kidnapping and murder, against government security personnel. Government security forces, in turn, have themselves come under scrutiny for repeated civil and human rights violations. Groups such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have identified Chapare as an area of particular concern, documenting cases of detention without cause and the use of excessive violence by police. Bolivia's Permanent Human Rights Assembly reports that there have been a total of 57 cocaleros killed by state security forces since 1987.

20. Current trends suggest state security forces can violate human rights without fear of prosecution. Of the 57 killings documented by the Permanent Human Rights Assembly, only three have been brought to court, and none of them have been concluded. Since March 2001, the government has been sending security personnel accused of human rights violations to military courts, even though this violates the Bolivian constitution and international accords to which Bolivia is a signatory. The concern, obviously, is that military courts will be biased and hesitant to make a ruling against members of their own institution, and in fact this has been borne out: thus far, no defendants have been convicted. US law forbids the provision of aid to security forces guilty of such crimes, but embassy officials favor the Bolivian government's version of what happened in any given case. The President of the Permanent Human Rights Assembly remarks of the US, "They talk about human rights and pressure the Bolivian state to carry out forced eradication, which is a synonym for violence, death, murdered campesinos, and tortured military and police. They put up the funds and we offer up the dead."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE PERMANENT HUMAN RIGHTS ASSEMBLY REMARKS OF THE US, "THEY TALK ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS AND PRESSURE THE BOLIVIAN STATE TO CARRY OUT FORCED ERADICATION, WHICH IS A SYNONYM FOR VIOLENCE, DEATH, MURDERED CAMPESINOS, AND TORTURED MILITARY AND POLICE. THEY PUT UP THE FUNDS AND WE OFFER UP THE DEAD."

CURRENTLY

21. In Bolivia's 2002 presidential elections, indigenous cocalero leader Evo Morales finished second; the winner was a US-educated millionaire. Morales represents two districts (including Chapare) in the national legislature, and has maintained his links to the popular base that elected him. He unabashedly identifies the United States as the source of the destructive drug policy—in October 2000, during negotiations with the government on coca eradication, he quipped, "We hope the government will consult quickly with the US embassy to get us an answer, since they [the embassy] give the orders around here." He has been repeatedly harassed by government forces, and during the presidential campaign, US ambassador Manuel Rocha warned Bolivians not to vote for him. It remains to be seen if the new administration will attempt to enforce the prohibition on traditional coca markets in Chapare.

22. Massive grassroots actions continue. In May, indigenous and other groups marched on Ba Paz to denounce attempts to alter the Bolivian constitution without public consultation. In June, several hundred miners put up highway roadblocks and forced the government to reverse the privatization of their workplaces. Although the new president called for opposition groups to observe a 90-day moratorium on protest, the next day saw a cocalero organization surround and disarm a military unit making a rural drug bust. The day after that, cocaleros fought with military units carrying out eradication in Chapare, and there were three marches through La Paz by various workers organizations.

ANALYSIS

23. Bolivia offers a devastating account of what happens when U.S. drug policy is imposed against the needs of another country. US ambassador Rocha has commented on Bolivia's commitment to eradicate the coca crop by noting, "If a time comes in which this commitment no longer exists, be assured, our aid will be different. The funds are there because of the commitment and without it, the aid will diminish." Under Plan Dignidad, cocaine production in Bolivia has been greatly reduced through the 90s, but the social costs have been significant. In effect, the government's attempts to gain US approval and maintain US aid have reduced its ability to provide for the domestic population.

24. Militarizing the anti-drug campaign has class implications: the rich get off lightly, while the poor get penalized. This is true globally, as the United States government demands that countries in the underdeveloped South reduce their drug crops, even though the demand predominates in the wealthy North. In the United States itself, harsh "law and order" approaches to the drug trade disproportionately affect poor minorities. Meanwhile, US-designed policy in Bolivia funds security forces to eliminate peasants' most successful crop, without providing adequate means for people to develop economic alternatives.

25. Bolivia should serve as a beacon for movements in the global North that oppose the drug war and corporate globalization. We don't hear much about cocaleros or opposition to the privatization of water in the mainstream media, maybe because if people here saw how grassroots activism can really work, they might try it themselves. Sometime before his ill-fated journey to Bolivia, Che Guevara told a group of United Statesians that he actually envied them, because they were uniquely positioned to take on the source of so much of the rest of the world's hardship. They lived, he said, "in the belly of the beast." Guevara's armed insurrection in Bolivia failed, but the spirit of a mass mobilization of have-nots that challenges the haves is alive and well. People in "the belly of the beast" ought to take note.

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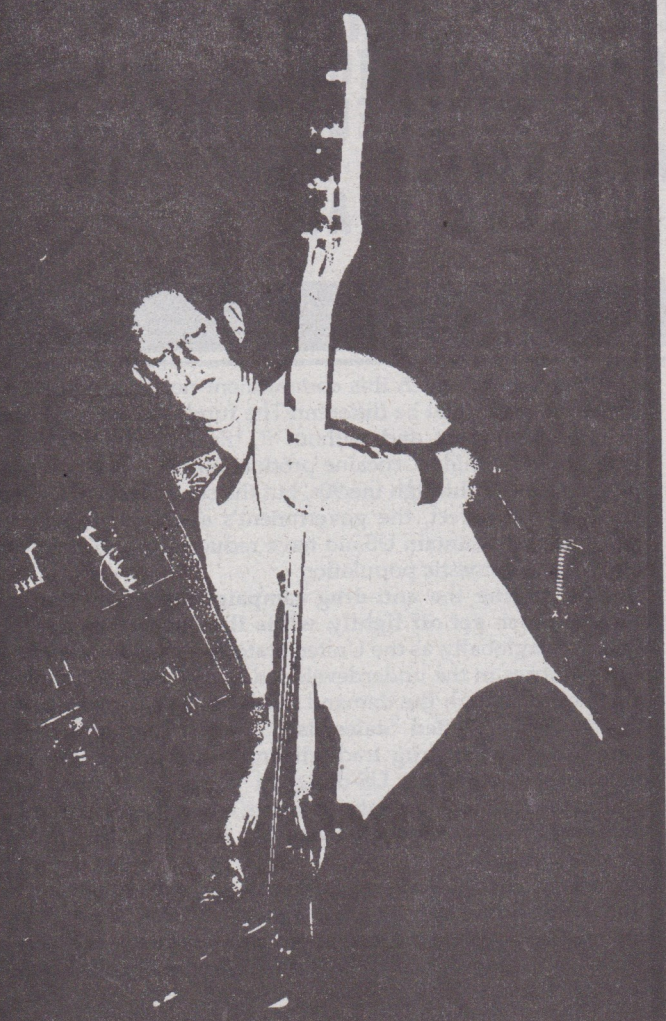
THE NEGATIVES



MRR: Tell us the band story of The Negatives.
Michael "Svegis": In the summer of '99 I called up Måe and told him that I was thinking about starting up a punk band. We had discussed it before several times while out drinking, but it never came to anything. I had come in contact with the present punk scene while out playing with my other band, The Skalatones, and got so inspired that I wanted to be a part of the punk scene again. Måe was interested and brought along his long time compadre, the drummer Asp from their crust punk band Shitbreed. I had already talked to their mutual friend, the vocalist J. Fred so everything was ready for some "back to the roots punk rock". Immediately we started to write some songs and everybody felt that this was something that was gonna last, this was the kinda punk we've grown up with, it just felt so right. This was something from the heart, the music we've always loved, so we really enjoyed playing together again. We have all played together before in other bands like D.T.A.L. and The Bristles during the early 80s. After those bands split up around '86–'87 we all played in other bands, everything from other punk bands to reggae and rock bands. The feeling for punk has always been there during the years, even though we have been in those other bands.
At the end of '99 we recorded seven songs for two different demo CDs, the *Punk Rock Revolution* demo and the *The Negatives* demo. The two demos were sent to several fan 'zines, magazines, radio stations and record companies. The responses were great, much better than we would have ever guessed, after all this was our first seven songs and were written pretty quick.
We played some gigs, including support for The Business at the beginning of 2001 and were constantly on the hunt for more gigs. We contributed on a couple of compilation CDs and where featured in quite a lot fan 'zines and web 'zines. We were nominated "Demo Band Of The Year 2000" in Sweden's biggest punk/metal magazine, *Close–Up*. In March 2001 we entered the same cheap studio again and recorded the three song demo *Riots In The Suburbs* and it got great response. By this time we had some contacts with a couple of record companies and a record deal was not far away.
We recruited a second guitarist and started rehearsing with him when suddenly vocalist J. Fred decided to leave the band. What to do? I phoned their long time friend, Jyrki, once the vocalist for Swedish early 80s punk band Existenz. This went great and he fit in really fast. A month later they once again entered the local studio to record two new songs, the demo was intended for the record companies so they would get to hear the new vocalist. The demo was called *Insubordination* and the two songs on this CD are the same songs that were on that demo. And then Trash 2001 Rec. get in contact and wanna release the stuff on a split single and on that way it is...
The Line-Up:
Jyrki Siikaluoma – Vocals
Måe Malmsten – Lead Guitar
Markus Wibom – Drums
Michael "Svegis" Svegbrandt – Bass
Dennis Jönsson – Guitar

MRR: Which bands had influence on the style of The Negatives? And what are your absolute fave bands (past & present)?
Michael "Svegis": My inspiration comes mainly from '77–'84 punk rock, but we are trying to give it a style of our own and maybe a little bit more up–to–date sound without forgetting their roots. My favs are Pistols, Clash, Cockney, Angelic, GBH, 4-Skins, Business and 100's of more good old punk bands. Today's favs are Agnostic Front, but the last one wasn't to good, The Swedes, VOAG, Bombshell Rocks. Rancid, Dropkick Murphys, Generators, haven't heard so much but the songs I heard were smashing, Business, Lars Fredriksens & the Bastards are also good. There are millions of good bands out there.
Måe: I'm influenced mainly by early punk bands from '77-'83 but also by some of the present bands such as Rancid, The Business (I know they're both past and present), Dropkick Murphys. I'm also influenced by garage punk bands such as Gluecifer, Turbo Negro, The Hellacopters (old stuff). Why ain't there any British bands nowadays? I've always preferred British punk rock, but nowadays I don't hear of any new bands, only a lot of reunions of old bands. Absolute fave bands, ok:
Past: Sex Pistols, K.S.M.B., Discharge
Present: The Business, Lars Fredriksen & The Bastards.
MRR: What is your opinion about the riots at the G8 conferences, especially about the one in Gothenburg? Were any of you there? Why didn't the Swedish police use water cannons, but did use real sharp ammunition?
Måe: The Swedish police have a lot of fascist/Nazi sympathizers among them. This is something that the Swedish police and the Swedish government don't wanna admit or deal with. My opinion about the riots is that if the police start to use violence against peaceful demonstrators, the riots are 100% ok, but I can't find any justice in destroying small private shops. Concentrate it to the multinational corporations and to fight the police. Riots seems to be the only way

nowadays to show you displeasure and get some attention, the bastard who's in control use more and more police and force when they get together for their capitalistic planning. They don't listen to any demonstrators. Gothenburg showed that they don't even seem to allow any demonstrators. They must realize that if they keep this up there's gonna be a class war in the future. I think it shows how stupid the Swedish government is when they don't realize that riots are a fact nowadays and when they are going to have this really big conference there's a big risk that there will be riots. So like you said, why not equip the police with water-cannons just in case. There are quite a lot of talk right now here in Sweden about prosecuting the police but they said that the police didn't do anything illegal when they shot with live ammunition right at the fleeing masses. Now the police are free from prosecution, justice—no fucking way.

MRR: What have you released to date? And where do you have releases and record your music ??

Michael "Svegis": We have released a split pic. 7"/CD-single, with the German band Electric Hellclub, on the German label TRASH 2001 in 2001. We have two tracks on it: "Insubordination" and "Ready Steady Go," Recorded in Sweden…

Our debut album *Rules And Regulations* is gonna be released on August 31, 2002 on Trash 2001 Rec. and recorded in 8 1/2 days in the KS-studio in Bottrop, Germany. It has 12 songs on it.

MRR: Please describe your sound to anyone not familiar with The Negatives!

Michael "Svegis": The inspiration comes mainly from '77-'84 punk, but we're trying to give it a style of our own without forgetting our roots. Our lyrics handle topics such as living in society today, greed of power and other things we hate or dislike. I think you can say that we play a sort of street punk but I don't like all these names for punk music… it's aggressive but the music isn't too fast. We try to keep the tempo down a bit but there's power to it anyway…and of course we're also influenced by today's bands…

Måe: Punk rock in the style of early 80s and '77 punk with influences from garage rock and also 90s influences sound wise.

MRR: What's up in Sweden. Please tell us about your punk rock world in Sweden. How is the scene? Which labels are cool, what's up with politics? Michael "Svegis": Most of the punks play in bands, that's for sure. There is a lot of help if you wanna get rehersal rooms cheap, borrow equipment, etc. So I can say it's easy to have a band here in Sweden but the scene is *shit*. With so many bands there should be a great live scene, but maybe the most people are interested with their own band so they don't care about other bands. I really don't know!?

Here there isn't a big rock/pop scene either, so that's says it all. We just have a population of 8 million spread all around this big country. There aren't so many labels either. Most Swedes' bands are on foreign labels. Burning Heart hasn't signed a punk band for ages.

Their [biggest] interest at the moment is to promote bands like Hives, INC, Division Of Laura Lee, which is a real pity. I think they have a responsibility to give out new fresh Swedish punk. As they are a big label that had a lot of punk bands before; they really should sign new Swedish punk bands. their last signings of punk bands were VOAG and Bombshell. But Mr. Brett and Epitaph own 49% of the stock now, so I don't what's up.

MRR: What do you think about resurrections of the legendary punk bands? Do they influence you in any [way] to play music?

Måe: In one way it´s fun that old bands start to play again, especially when it´s an old favorite band but in another way I really don't like it. The old bands get all the gigs because they've already got a name working for them, so it makes it really hard for new bands to break through and get gigs and record deals. So if I should make a choice, I would prefer that those bands that reunited just because of making some money should never reunite, and those bands who reunited because they really wanted to start playing again because they love what they're doing, well they're OK.

Michael "Svegis": Yeah, I also thinks there's to many bands that get together again just for the money. They get all the attention and the newer bands get a harder road to gigs and record contracts. Most of the bands from the period from '77-'84 play again. That's almost pathetic. We must give the new bands a chance. It can't just be a nostalgic-trip.

MRR: Who is the band leader and who is the first songwriter in the band? Please tell us a little bit about your lyrics, which them do you take for your music and from where do you take the ideas for the lyrics

Michael "Svegis": No band leader, everybody is free to do songs…but mostly me and Mae do the songs. The lyrics handle topics such as living in society today, greed of power and other things they hate or dislike, as I said before. The ideas for the lyrics come from everyday life and things you have get through in the journey of life

Måe: I write a lot of music at home and then we try it out together at the rehearsal place. We don't have any band leader or first songwriter in the band. Me, Svegis and Asp write all the lyrics, and me and Svegis write all the music, sometimes together and sometimes by ourselves, and then present the song at the next rehearsal, but most of the time we arrange the song differently than it was written from the beginning.

MRR: What are your next plans with the band?

Michael "Svegis": Gigs, more records, have the album out everywhere, do great new songs, have people listen to our lyrics, meet great people out there who make the punk-scene alive, all you great people like you that do 'zines, have independent, small, cool, punk labels that do this thing from the heart and not for fucking profit, KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK...

Måe: Rehearse with our new drummer and make a bunch of new songs.

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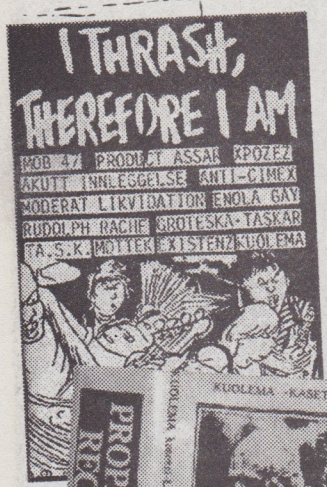
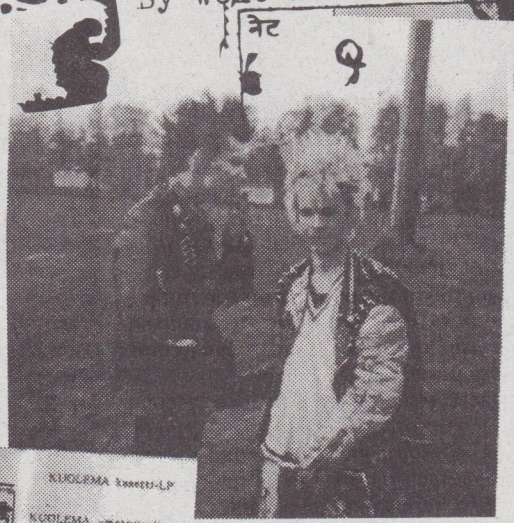
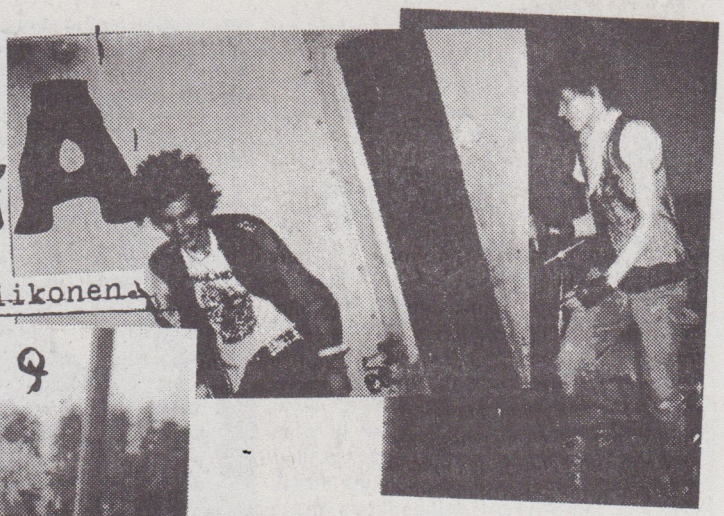
JUGOSLAVIJA

KUOLEMA 20

By Weke Riikonen





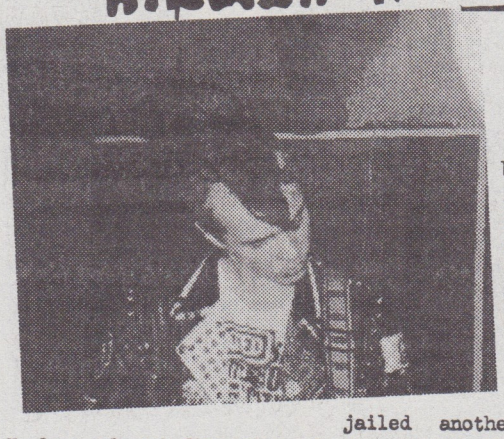


Kuolema formed in Fall of 1982. We (Walde, Juki, Ile, and Weke) thought that we could play hardcore by sniffing glue and drinking alcohol. Terveet Kädet was from near our hometown, Kemi, 25 kilometers from Tornio, and we knew the guys from the band. One day, we sat down in Walde's attic and tried to decide who would play what instrument. Walde was the only one who knew how to play drums, but he wanted to play guitar. So I decided to play drums, and Juki was put on bass. We got Ile to sing. Ile sang in a band with two of his schoolmates called Rampton where they drummed empty cardboard boxes and played guitar. You can only hear them on the *Punk-elää* cassette compilation that Juki and I put out in the early 80s. We first practiced and recorded in Walde's attic. We usually recorded every practice, because we were so drunk that if we wrote a song no one could remember it for more than a hour. Hopefully someday those legendary tapes will be found, but what's gone is gone. At the first practice, Ile wrote some lyrics on paper, Walde came up with some music, and we played it as fast as possible. One, two, three, four! About 30 seconds later the first song was recorded. Walde's mother ran upstairs from the yard and asked who we were killing. Noting the circumstances, that was the best reaction, because everyone had a new instrument to play and no one really knew how to play it. But that's the normal way to form a Finnish hardcore band. No one can play their instruments, but we have the willingness to make some wonderful noise.

Once we had written a few songs, we had to start thinking about booking shows. We played a show in Syke, a local youth bar, with a shitty local youth band. We had been practicing for three or four weeks and we had a set of six of our own songs, plus Lama's "Jeesukset". We were very drunk backstage before we went on, and we swore that Kuolema would only play seven songs. So we got to play. Wonderful, we thought, Kuolema's first show and five minutes of music, tops. It would be nice if I could remember something about that set, but all I remember is that I hit the drumstick through the drum head. After a few months we got our own gig, paying 1500 marks. We were required to play two forty-five minute sets and no alcohol was allowed. When we signed the contract, we knew that we would never get the money, because we don't play sober and we only had 15 or 20 minutes' worth of songs. We thought that we could play the set four times and no one would notice. We went onstage drunk as apes and the shock was hard. The house was full, everyone wanted to see the town's drunk punks playing a show. During the first song, Ile broke the microphone by throwing it against a wall. Then Walde's guitar equipment broke. We tried to keep playing, but it didn't work out. Then the equipment was fixed and we played "Huora" and half of Terveet Kädet's "Vapaa Pohjola" before the equipment broke again. After that, the gig was finished. The Syke bar was normally a peaceful place, but that night someone pissed and shat in a corner! The next gig was in Oulu, the biggest city in North Finland, in 1983. The gig was in a house called Rauhala. There was a small, round stage and a lot of punks around it. There are a few songs recorded from that show on Kuolema's *Noise Not Music* CD. This gig was the best one. We played 20 minutes, as hard as possible. It was some kind of hardcore party, other bands like Kaaos and Terveet Kädet played. After that was gig number one, the Finnish independence party on December 6, 1983, in Rovaniemi, the North capital of Finland. We played with Kaaos, Terveet Kädet, Varaus, and more. Walde also played in Terveet Kädet and he wanted to be sober for Terveet Kädet's set, so they played, then some other band played, and then Kuolema. The rest of us had already drank two bottles of wine, which was our nornal amount. Walde wasn't as drunk as us, so he drank some booze very fast. I thought we played well, but then Rike from Bastards turned off our power. What a pisshead! Rike Bastards, a very fitting name for this man. Before that gig he was our friend. We had exchanged letters and cassettes with him. Even the Bastards' *Maailma Palaa Ja Kuolee* EP's thanks list starts with Juki & Weke... And then this bastard turns off our power. That guy was a shithead that night.

That was the last time that Walde played in Kuolema. In February of 1984 he fell from a balcony and died. We were pretty sad and we didn't know what to do. But we decided to continue with Mäkinen from Rutto (a hardcore band from Tornio) on guitar. We practiced with him for a few months. Gig number five was in Oulu again, another hardcore party. I don't remember any of the bands except Kaaos (because we drank with them). Our set was great,

We thought that we could play hardcore by sniffing glue and drinking alcohol.



but afterwards Ile went to smoke outside of the building, where some cops grabbed him and threw him into a waiting cop car. They also jailed another person. So Kuolema played five gigs. In the summer of 1983 we should have had a gig in Lepakko, Helsinki, the capital of Finland, but half of the band was spleeted by the influence of alcohol. The gigs were played, but the band forgets. The biggest reason for Kuolema's splitting was Walde's death, but there were other things, too. Ile, Juki, and I became total alcoholics and stopped being interested in anything besides drinking. Then I had to go to civil service in Tornio, Ile moved to Kuopio, East Finland, and Juki moved to Helsinki, where he started to use drugs. In those circumstances it was hard to get the band started again-I didn't even think there was a chance.

But back to those good Kuolema times. In the beginning of the 80s a lot of hardcore and punk shows were being organized in Lepakko. Usually every band playing those parties was from Finland. Near Lepakko there was Lasol-house, an abandoned house, where a bunch of punks and drunks lived and you could sleep for free. The nastiest memory from Lepakko was from one weekend, when we played our own show in Lepakko. Juki and Ile spleeted Lepakko's backyard that afternoon under the influence of alcohol. Discharge had to play that Monday night. They played, but on Monday morning we all had hangovers and no money. Our designated driver Teppola said that he wanted to drive back to Kemi, because he was hungry. So what could we do, it was his decision and his car. I didn't get to see Discharge, which still makes me angry. Vilenius from Propagand Records put us on the *Hardcore '83* compilation LP, where we have one song called "Äpärä". This song was born in Juki's parents' home. We took Terveet Kädet's "Pissaa and Paskaa" song, played it faster, and Juki and I sang. The first Kuolema recording was ready. It was only one song, but that was enough for us. The postage to other countries was so expensive for us, like I'm sure it was for other hardcore bands. We had to sell the *Punkelää* cassette, Bastards EP, and Kuolema. We sent tapes everywhere. We did interviews with little magazines from all over the world: Finland, Sweden, the Netherlands, UK, USA, and Brazil, where, strangely enough, most of the mail came from. There were also some Japanese punks that were interested. The best of what I can remember of the Netherlands was Lärm, who played the same kind of noise as we did. We seemed to be most popular in Brazil, because of all the letters, zines, records, and tapes we got from bands like Sepultura, Olho Seco, Ratos de Porao and lot of others.

I played bass in Tauno ja Taatelintallaajat from 1987 to 1994, during which I was kicked out five or six times. Tauno ja Taatelintallaajat wasn't HC but more of a Finnish drunk punk band. The guys in the band weren't too into alcohol, so I changed my booze to cannabis with the result that I was dismissed from the band many times, and finally for good in 1994. I last played in Tauno ja Taatelintallaajat-I haven't played in any band since. Juki moved to Helsinki in 1986 and stayed in South Finland from 1986 to 1996. He was a junkie who burned out in 1996, when he stopped using heroin and speed. Mäkinen disappeared in

1990; he was last seen in Helsinki. Ile moved to Kuopio, living the family life, then he moved to Helsinki in 1996. I squatted a house in Kemi from 1987 to 1992, when I burned out from drinking too much alcohol. In 1993 I changed from booze to cannabis and I haven't seen Ile since that year.

In 2000 Juki and I started traveling the world. First, six weeks in Thailand, then six weeks in Spain and Morocco, then back to Thailand for three months. Then we went back to Finland for six months, then back to Thailand, where we lived for one and a half years. In Thailand we started drinking again and after drug and booze problems, burnouts, local fevers, and other things, we came back to Finland, traveling first to Singapore and Denmark in September of 2002. In Thailand Juki and I made the decision to continue our musical experiences and we started to plan a new hardcore band. The problem was that we didn't want to live in Finland anymore. In Denmark we found a house where some punks and anarchists lived. We played our CD to the house's punks and we all agreed to start a band. The project's name is Noise Not Music. The name and vocals had to be changed to English, but that wasn't a problem. In January of 2003 we heard that Ile had started Kuolema again in Helsinki in 2001 and that they had started to play gigs. That was OK with us. Ile has Kuolema's name on his band and Juki and I use the Noise Not Music name. We wish the current Kuolema the best of luck, and Ile too. We'd like to see the new Kuolema-it would be nice to see a band now that we started over twenty years ago. In February of 2003 Juki and I started our journey again, this time to Denmark and the rest of Europe. Before summer we will come back with our new CD on hand. Noise Not Music will kick people so they can see that hardcore is still alive.

Kuolema recorded every practice, so we got material to send to the world. We didn't remember every time how to play our songs, and therefore every recording was a wonderful mixing. Tapes were usually sent to magazines. Magazines from other lands were sent to us and Kuolema was on many compilation tapes in the Netherlands, the UK, Japan, USA, and especially Brazil, but after twenty years everything has disappeared. I now especially want to find out if anyone has other music from Kuolema that is not on the *Noise Not Music* compilation, so if you do, can you please contact me and record those tapes for me? My e-mail is protoplasma55@hotmail.com. All other mail is welcome too. If somebody wants to get in touch, please write to Weke Riikonen, Tapaninkatu 6 A 2, FIN-94100 Finland.

DEFIANCE

Defiance have been a long time favorite of mine. Playing infectously catchy punk which brings to mind the best moments off the *Punk and Disorderly* comps, their records get pretty heavy play around the *MRR* house. So, after nearly wearing out their records, I figured it was time to pick their brains. Interview conducted by Mike Thorn via email answered by Mike and Matt from Defiance

MRR: Let's start out with the history of the band Mike's the only original member, right? Why so many line up changes over the years? To those who don't already know you, how would you describe Defiance?

Mike: Defiance began in the winter of 1993 out of the ashes of Deprived, Resist and Unamused-Portland's three most notorious anarcho-punk bands of the late 80s and early 90s.

The first line-up of Defiance consisted of myself (guitar/vox) from Deprived, Tony (vox) and Kelly (bass) also from Deprived and Resist, Alaric (vox) from Unamused, and Eric (drums). After a few short months and a couple local gigs, studio time was booked and our first two singles were recorded in one session. These Sessions produced what were to become our first EP in 1994 on Consensus Reality one of the member's newly formed label.

After the release of the first single, a two month tour of the U.S. was booked over the summer of 1994.Shortly after the U.S. tour Tony left the band. As a four piece the group released the second single, the *Burn* EP in 1995 and left for a short tour of Canada and the U.S. Upon returning we quickly went back into the studio and began work on their first full lenght LP. In the fall of 1995, we set out on an East Coast tour with The Final Warning,, The Casualties and the Varukers…and then it was off to Europe. A tour single was rush released in Milan, Italy to coincide with the European tour in 1995. This was the third single. It contained a few unreleased tracks and the title track from the forthcoming LP. Two and a half months and 19 countries later, we returned and took a much needed hiatus. It was not until our return that the debut LP *No Future No Hope* was released in early 1996 on the U.S. label Mind Control and the European pressing on the German label Skuld Releases.

After the European tour, Kelly left the band and was replaced by long-time friend Chris on bass. The fourth single, the *No Time* EP, was released on Profane Existence records and followed up by an East Coast tour in 1997. The first gig of the tour was in Minneapolis, MN. This was to be the setting for the infamous "Bomb Shelter Riot."

Shortly after Defiance erupted into their set the show was interupted by the Minneapolis police. Forty squad cars arrived and punks and police clashed outside of the club resulting in several arrests and several injured police.

Upon returning to Portland, we Began looking for a second guitarist. This was to be Matty from the Portland punk band The Obliterated (who oddly enough had been invited to join at the original formation of bthe band back in 1993). The addition of Matt on second guitar proved to be essential to a fuller sound live. After a short West Coast tour in 1998 with The Riffs, came the long awaited second full-length LP (again on Mind Control Records) titled *Nothing Lasts Forever*.

After the release of the LP European and Japanese tour plans were made. Alaric (Gibby) and Eric (Niff) decided to pack it in... Shortly followed by Chris. It looked as if maybe the title of the second LP may have been the final irony for the band... but after a lot of thought, myself and long-time member Matt began writing new material and recruited two new members: Alan on bass and Bri on drums, and quickly rushed off for a short tour of Mexico in the spring of 2001.

The new blood with the combination of Mike and Matt on vocals and guitars proves to be the best line-up thus far. The third full-length LP *Out of the Ashes* was released in August of 2002 on Punkcore, followed by our first full U.S. tour since 1994. We completed the hugely successful tour with an appearance at the 2002 Holidays in the Sun Festival in New Jersey. Upon arrival back to Portland it was back in too the studio for four new songs for what will become our fifth single. The new single will be released in the spring of 2003 on Punkcore simultaneously with a complete singles collection of all our previous out of print EPs. In March of 2003, we will be touring the West Coast with UK's Icons of Filth, and plans for another European tour are in the works for the summer of 2003.

As far as line up changes go, over a ten year period people change as do their relationships I don't know many bands that have the exact same line-up after this long, let alone still be a band. As far as me being the only original member it would have to be because the band means a lot to me and I've put countless hours of work into it. I don't feel it's time to stop it now or anytime soon.

MRR: Your new album is on Punkcore; why the switch from Mind Control? How has it differed? Good and bad... be honest.

Mike: Well we are happy with Punkcore at the moment Dave is really easy to work with and supportive of the things we want to do, so it's good. As far as Mind Control goes, Jack is a very good friend. As far as the label, there were some distribution and communication problems when he tried to expand the label. Outside parties were brought in and that made it hard to know what was

going on with our releases, so we chose to move on

MRR: Speaking of Punkcore have you caught any flak for being a band that has always been identified as being anarcho, being on a label which has put out nationalist skinhead records?

Mike: No, our lyrics or what we are about hasn't changed since day one. As far as the skinhead stuff that came out in the early years of Punkcore-it has nothing to do with us.

MRR: Can you tell us about the song "Missiles" from the new album? Why do you feel it's important to sing about that?

Mike: When we wrote this song, the US was in the process of invading the country of Afghanistan. When this interview comes out they will probably have already invaded Iraq... *again*. Anyway the song is about the fact that people don't really even think about the reality of war until it's at their front door or until it's too late. I think it's important to sing about since no one really seems to care enough to do a fucking thing about it

MRR: You played Holidays in the Sun this past summer, what was it like? Good experience? Bad? Weird? Mixture of

all three? Explain. Is it just a dinosaurs of punk rock convention?

Matt: It was kind of all three, It was cool to see some of those old 80s UK bands that I had never had a chance to see before. Got to meet some very cool people, met punks from all over the place. That aspect of it was cool. It's always fun to meet different punks from far away and you can identify with them. It makes you glad to be a part of it. There were the random assholes though. Just idiots who have no clue as to what it's all about. Some Nazis showed up and started shit while we were playing. That really pissed us off. We started talking shit to them and people in the crowd threw them out. It was cool that people did that because it showed that crap wasn't tolerated there. Other than that happening the festival was pretty good.

Mike: I had a lot of fun there was tons of people and two stages and I think there was actually more new bands than old, but with two stages you can pick what you wanna see and do whatever you want. Some of the older bands are obviously just in it for the money but some just haven't changed and I think that's really cool.

MRR: Portland is kinda famous for having millions of inbred bands going on. Are you all playing in anything else beyond Defiance right now? If so what, and what are they like? Is it the weather up there that makes everyone stay indoors all the time and play in bands?

Matt: I was playing with Poison Idea but I quit recently. That was a lot of fun but I'm glad to be doing just one band now. None of us are really doing any other projects besides Defiance right now. I do play records on punk night at a local bar. It's a lot of fun. I just get drunk and make everyone else listen to what I want to hear. Its called DV8 if you're ever in Portland on a Wednesday night. I think the weather up here turns people into serial killers and mass murderers. This religious fanatic just killed his wife and kids a few weeks ago up here. That happens quite a bit. There are a lot of serial killers from the northwest. I think the constant rain and clouds make people depressed and they go nuts.

MRR: Tell me about the scene in Portland-bands, venues, other projects etc.

Matt: There are some really great bands in Portland. The Riffs, of course are great, Hellshock are good Swedish style hardcore, two ex Defiance members, Gibby and Niff, are in a new band called Bloodspit Nights and have just put out a new EP, and it's awesome. I don't know, there are new punk bands constantly popping up; most of them are really good. I think most of the venues going now are not that great. There are a few good ones though. The scene here is pretty strong, I think. It goes up and down here as with every where else. Some times it's good, sometimes it's shit.

Mike: The scene here is really cool. It's pretty big for a city the size of Portland. I mean there are a lot of younger and older punks that hang out and it's not as divided as it has been in the past. A lot of new people seem to be moving here after they visit, so it just keeps getting bigger. It seems like there is always something going on, which keeps everyone pretty busy. As far as venues the are mostly 21 and over ones and only really one all ages one, but it could be worse, I suppose.

MRR: Is Defiance a political band? Do you think punk is political? Should it be? Why or why not? I ask this because a good deal of the "studs and spikes" scene seems to likes to frame itself as being apolitical, do you agree or disagree with this notion?

Matt: Yes, we are a political band; I would be lying if I said we were not. We write political songs. We don't want to preach to people but our songs do reflect our ideas and beliefs. However, I don't think that punk should or should not be political. I think that the attitude is what makes a band stick out. There are great punk bands who are political and there are great punk bands who are not. As far as the studs and spikes scene being apolitical, up here that's not the case. Most of the people here have definite views even if they don't admit it. I think some of that crowd elsewhere may be like that but if they listen to us they may realize that there is more to punk than just spiked hair and studs.

Mike: I think punk is different to everyone but to me it's a form of rebellion against the mainstream (music, fashion, and politics) as mainstream music offers nothing real or anything that isn't superficial. With how long Punk has been going though, there are going to be people who latch on to different aspects of the sub-culture. For some it seems to be the fashion, for others the music, and for some the politics. I think we combine all the elements, but we've always written "political" or "personal political" lyrics. It's kind of hard to label your own band, eh?

MRR: Tell me about the song "Terrorist Attack" from the new album. What is it all about and what prompted you to write it?

Mike: "Terrorist Attack" was written just after the September 11th attacks. It was prompted by the attacks themselves and also by the nauseating flood of patriotism that shortly followed. The fact that no one even stopped to question why the U.S had been attacked was crazy. I think it is very sad that so many innocent people had to lose their lives as a consequence of U.S. foreign policy. Basically, how many more people have to die before people realize the terror of capitalism and worldwide U.S. Imperialism?

MRR: Who's more frightening? John Ashcroft or Tom Ridge? Or is Dick Cheney worse than the two combined?

Mike: They are all shit.

Matt: They all like to eat shit.

MRR: Favorite five bands, current and dead.

Mike: The Clash, Conflict, The Partisans, Cockney Rejects and Motorhead.

Matt: Discharge, English Dogs, The Germs, ABBA, and the Sex Pistols.

MRR: Worst thing to every happen to you on tour, embellish if you want.

Mike: Well it's probably not the worst, but on the last tour we were leaving Oakland and the hood flew up and shattered the entire windshield. After that we got on the wrong freeway and had to back track for two hours to get back to Oakland, just to drive for eight more to try to get to one of the biggest shows on the tour in LA (which we almost missed). But because it was a weekend and we had straight shows every night, we couldn't get it fixed 'til New Mexico. So we drove for like three states with the entire windshield flapping in the wind, wondering when it was going to come crashing in on us and kill and maim us all.

MRR: Closing comments, anything else you want to add/talk about?

Mike: Thanks to Mike and MRR for the interest and for the interview. As mentioned earlier, we are preparing for a tour in late March with UK Anarcho band Icons of Filth. Then later this summer we will be going to Holidays in the Sun UK and then Europe again for the first time in like seven years so we'll see you all at the gigs. Cheers, Up the Punks.

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US distribution: Ebullition, Stickfigure, Choke, Dave Hill, Some Strange Music, Subterranean and others
European distribution: Green Hell and X-Mist
Japan: Record Shop Base

NIHILISTICS LP

Re-release of this seminal New York hardcore punk band's 1983 debut album pressed onto vinyl. The Nihilistics originally hailed from Long Island, but gigged around Manhatten in clubs like A7, CBGB's, and the Mudd Club, and appeared on the legendary New York Thrash compilation with the Beastie Boys, the Mad, and the Bad Brains. Through their wild live shows, they developed a reputation as one of the most damaged and misanthropic bands in New York City.

THE BAD FORM 7"

The debut disk of a maniacal whirlwind of rock n roll madness from this NJ band. Followed up by an appearance on TMU's "Troubleman Mix Tape" and an EP on the Youth Attack label. Too well versed in early hardcore and dissonant no wave to be able to be called a "garage rock" band in good faith. **(Last copies left!!!)**

THE SKABS: AGED TO PERFECTION CD

Vaudevillian deathrock with a carnivalesque new wave sound from this veteran NY band. Says Punk Planet, they "should play with the Faint, but they'd probably scare the audience."

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Outpatients– 1982-1984 discography (tentative)
And much more to come.

The website is now up: www.matwrecords.com

BOOKS

Orchid
116 pages
Sparkplug Comic Books
PO BOX 10952
Portland, OR • 97296-0952
www.sparkplugcomics.com

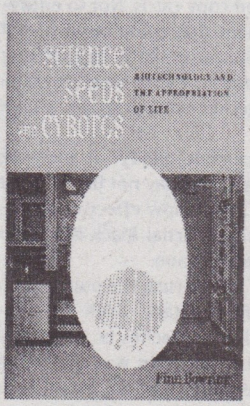
This is a collection of macabre stories adapted to comic form by underground illustrators, many of whom are independent publishers as well. Some of these artists are very familiar to me, like Ben Catmull who lived across the street from me in Oakland and published a zine called *Paper Theater*. It was mostly comprised of comics that were not unlike his work in *Orchid*—short, gloomy, and to the point. That's showing quite a bit of restraint for a guy who drinks as much coffee as Ben.

Another artist who appears in *Orchid* is Jesse Reklaw, and you may have seen his work (*Slow Wave*) in your local weekly paper, as it is now appearing in various publications. The premise for Jesse's comic strip is that his readers send their dreams in, and Jesse illustrates those dreams into a comic strip format. His work in *Orchid* is a collaboration with Lark Pien called *The Story of The Demonic Pacheco*, and it is a great rendering of one of the most entertaining tales *Orchid* has to offer, and it also sets the bar fairly high for the rest of the contributors that follow. The comic is illustrated in a flowing, ghostly manner, which mirrors the tale involving she-devils, adultery, and possesion. There is an atmosphere created, and like all good stories, this one leaves you to your imagination at the end. Always leave them wanting more. It works for comics too.

The Raven, as adapted by David Lasky is a straightforward affair in it s telling of Poes classic tale, but the comic is almost Hitchcock-like in its exceution and its analytical approach to composition. Very well planned, it toys with the readers sense of suspense, and before you can complain that *The Raven* has already been adapted one too many times, he has you firmly by the throat.

There is much more to discover in *Orchid*, and in doing so you will be supporting an underground network of artists, writers, and publishers who do what they do for the love of it. sThat kind of passion in the arts is what keeps the underground relevant and neccesary, now more than ever.

—Jay Unidos



The Final Frontier: America Science and Terror
Dominick Jenkins
312 pages • Verso

Not often do I get such a timely book to review. As some Americans rush to hardware stores to buy duct tape and plastic sheets to survive a FEMA-warned chemical weapon attack, I read in *Final Frontier* about fake air attacks on New York City designed to convince the residents of this country's largest city, and those who really make these decisions, of the need to devote as much money as needed to the development of war technology.

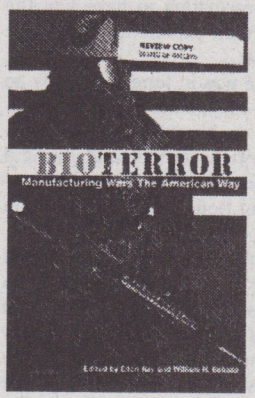
As if to prove that little changes, these fake air attacks occurred in 1921. Despite the fact that it was not possible technologically, General Billy Mitchell organized the fake gassing of major US cities to manipulate the fears of a post World War I populace. In this book, Jenkins details the history and ideology behind war technology. And of course, because the same people and interests still control the budget, it's a warning for the future as well as a chronicle of the past.

One of the most interesting themes is that while using an imaginary enemy and "outlaw states" as a way to advance the power of technological, military and expansionist interests, the US actually has helped create such possibilities. "...in seeking to secure themselves against imagined terror in the past, Americans have ended up exercising terror over others and contributing to the creation of a world in which such terrors are real". Jenkins details claims like this thoroughly and the implications to today's situation are obvious.

Jenkins is a longtime anti-nuclear activist, having worked for Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. There are many parts of this book that I would recommend on their own. Jenkins discusses the rationale for a US imperial state, interests of different groups within the power structure and debates the merits of what he calls "pure science" vs. "deep science" in what was to me, the most unique section of the book.

This book is so detailed, and packed with so much information that it would be impossible to mention everything covered within. And though it's claimed to be written "in the manner of a detective story" I must mention that it's a much slower read than that. It is however, a very valuable read especially in this time of permanent war against terrorism.

—Gordon Zola



Bioterror: Manufacturing Wars the American Way
80 Pages • $9.95
Ocean Press
www.oceanbooks.com.au

The co-founders of CovertAction Quarterly have reprinted these essays—written between 1982 and 1993—just in time to remind us, in this time of fear and war, that as usual, the USA is the biggest perpetuator of covert and overt biological warfare this world has seen.

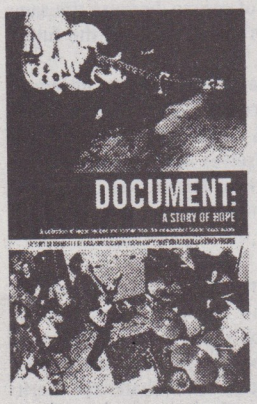
These nine essays, including an introduction from the editors, cover a diverse range of countries, eras, and styles of biologics, beginning with the smallpox-infected blankets given to Native Americans in 1763 and concluding with the possibility that the USA gave money to Iraq in 1989 to build chemical and biological agent factories: *Iraqgate*. All of the articles are relatively short and to-the-point, with little background but extensive footnoting. This is a good book to read, and it won't take much time from your busy schedule to do so.

Usually books written on this (and related) subjects are fucking long and dry, and while the info presented here isn't exactly exciting, the editors manage to keep interest up by the brevity of writings selected and the (almost) fantastic nature of some of the more covert actions. Some of these being: Zimbabwe's anthrax epizootic, widespread chemical and biological warfare against Cuba dating back at least twenty years, weather modification, involuntary birth control pill studies in Haiti, and clouds of bacteria released over San Francisco in 1950. Also discussed are topics most folks at least are marginally aware of, like Agent Orange and its connection to American based transnationals, and Gulf War Syndrome. A tiny history of

international law covering biologicals in wartime is given to the reader as well.

Now, while this is good shit to know, the purpose of this book is broader than just fact-distribution. The main effect this book has, and its underlying point, is that the USA can do anything it fucking wants to do. To anybody. Anywhere, at home and abroad. And really, nothing can stop it. Check this book out, and start wondering what they are putting in the water.

—Jake Filth



Document: A Story of Hope
edited by Niall McGuirk
160 pages • $10.00
Hope Publishing • 31 Hazel Road
Donnycarney
Dublin 9 • Ireland
www.thumped.com/hope

To document a series of events and apply meaning is the story of punk rock. Singular events and gatherings somehow have a larger contextual meaning for some of those involved. The Hope Collective was formed in the mid 80s by kids in Dublin who wanted to stage shows for their bands to play, and to see some of their favorite bands without having to travel far and wide. The idea of *Document: A Story of Hope* was to document shows that the collective put on, accompanied by vegan recipes from performing bands and recollections of the shows by bands and collective members. Niall McGuirk painstakingly undertook this task of compiling experiences and lists of ingredients.

As anyone who has tried to get punks to show up to band practice or write something for a zine or start a bike gang knows that getting things done, even in your own town, can be difficult. Try a worldwide search for contributors. This difficulty, it seems, dropped a majority of the writing on to Niall's shoulders. He describes different shows without monotony, which is commendable. It would have been fascinating to have had the bands add more about their trip to Dublin and their experiences, but some of the stories collected from bands are priceless.

The first show held by the Hope Collective was in June 1984, truly an exciting era for punk. This was a different time for the music and the community at large. Information about touring and contacts that are now readily available were being charted in the unknown waters of underground punkdom at that time. Though punk was thriving in the early 80s, the network was still being built, and here the story of Hope opens with a vegan pancake recipe.

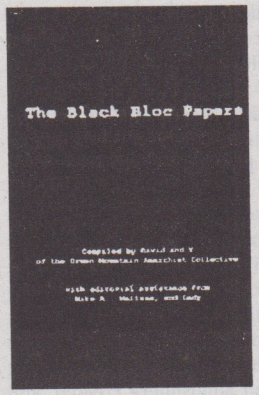
Niall's first band, Vicarious Living, was the impetus to book the first Hope-esque show. Six months after purchasing guitars, they were ready to play a show (good punks!) and just intuitively went about setting it up. Call the venue, book the venue, find a singer, find another band even if they don't have a name yet, then pester every friend in town to attend. Simple and effective. The 80s slowly built up a crew of like-minded souls that wanted to help with booking bands and making the Hope shows happen. Recipes like 1, 2 X You Calcium Shake from Michael Murphy of Pleasure Cell, Macaroni and Not Cheese from Derek Grant of the Vandals, and Chocolate Cake from Guy Picciotto of Fugazi fill each page next to a behind-the-scene story of how and why the Hope Collective originators put on these show. From 1984 to 1988, the founding members of the collective arranged nine shows. Another nine shows went off in 1989 alone. Things were picking up, with more foreign bands wanting to tour abroad and the local scene support growing stronger.

The 1990s exploded with shows with bands like The Ex, GO!, Wat Tyler, Thatcher On Acid, MDC, Oi Polloi, Dirt, and on and on. Many pages of the later 90s shows contain only a recipe, but it is still fun to think of some of these people cooking up a big vegan meal. Since one of these yummy recipes was submitted by my roommate who rarely cooks, it kind of destroys my image of Bob Drop Dead daily cooking up a vegan storm, though his recipe for Kung Fu Ramen is verily uncomplicated and a cost effective way to fill one s stomach.

The story that stands out the most has to be the sad story of the Downcast show. The show was a nightmare and the singer of Downcast, Kevin, left the stage crying. Oh, the torture of being emo. The band was falling apart and tour was making them hate each other, so it was more than just an emo moment full of sensi-boy tears. Kevin s recipe for Vegetable Curry looks pretty good—just remember to put enough curry in to make your friends cry.

The funniest recipe comes from Colm Bannon of Flying Kidney, who describes in detail the creating of a gourmet vegan snack: Bread Sandwiches. Even the most culinarily retarded punks can figure this one out. There are three differing tofu scramble recipes which makes me feel better about my fanatical love of this stuff. Donna of Team Dresch s recipe assisted me in cooking up some delicious Lonely Planet Girl Muffins, though somehow I messed up the simple Los Crudos Torta Fritas. Ouch, it s just fried bread! This collection will sit proudly with my vegan cookbooks and zines in the kitchen, where I can consult it regularly for new ideas and stories about one collective and its impact on many bands and a few dedicated organizers lives. Off to make some Fat Day Maple Sweet Potato Pudding!

—Tobia Jean



The Black Bloc Papers
David and X
272 pages • $12.00
Black Clover Press
greencollective@chek.com

This book presents some interesting questions within the larger challenges of the anti-capitalist movement. It is comprised (mostly) of reprints from the public statements of the black bloc movement over the past few years. Included are "from the field" reports from Seattle (November 1999), D.C. (April 2000, January 2001), NYC (May 2000), Detroit/Windsor (June 2000), Philadelphia (July-August 2000), Los Angeles (August 2000), Boston, St. Louis, Montreal (October 2000), Cincinnati (November 2000) and Quebec (April 2001). There is no question about the need that anti-capitalists, anarchists, anti-authoritarians, and anti-globalists have for a book length accounting of the tactics, failures and successes of the black bloc tactic within the larger anti-globalization movement.

In that light, this book is a qualified success. It actually tells the story of the black bloc in the words of the participants. And the "Peasants Revolt" statement from the Acme Collective (in response to the events and media depictions of Seattle) is worth the price of admission alone; both as radical propaganda and as a good introduction to the sblack bloc for the newcomer.

That said, the quality of this book could hardly have been shabbier. From the glue sticked table of contents (they obviously confused the page numbers on their first pass) to the erratic typefaces and weight choices (not to even mention the typos) this book screams amateur hour and feels like it was published at a local Kinko's with scammed copy cards. Not to entirely prioritize quality over content, but a document that could be as useful as this one shouldn't fall apart in your hands! It is also a little strange that the only "publisher" information that is included in the book is an email address BUT somehow the publisher got it together enough to get a ISBN number. Rather strange priorities.

Why would you want to keep this document handy? It presents answers to problems that many of us are having. They may not be the most correct (or practical) answers, but testimonials about how effective street-tactics are can teach a lot. For instance the stilted partial Black Bloc rush tactic is analyzed as practiced in Boston in October 2000:

"There were also complaints that the bloc would rush the police, then run away, leaving peaceful protesters vulnerable to attack. Such is a complete misperception. Yes, after one of the orderly breeches of the blockades, the police rushed us and some retreated... The plan was that while the police were busy handling the initial broken blockade, we would rush forward at another point. This plan failed due to lack of general coordination."

The book begins (about the first 20%) with a lengthy analysis of the

motivation, demographics, and culture of the Black Bloc participant. The picture emerges of the Black Blocer as a counter-cultural, working-class hero linked to the larger anti-globalization movement through sober consideration of their arguments and data. The movement against globalization and capitalism is filtered through various Marxist traditions with increasing granularity concluding with a sort of dreamy-eyed post-situationist analysis of global capitalism in a declaration of impending collapse (as if we haven't heard that one before). It's only after the picture is painted of the Black Bloc as on the side of right and against horrible odds do we get to hear from our little David's own mouths. Which brings up a major fork in the road that the GMAC (the Green Mountain Anarchist Collective compiled this book) do not seem to address. Is this book written for the civilian (a non-political person, a friend or family member of a Black Blocer?) or the fellow traveler? If the former then this introductory material is completely necessary and absolutely over any one's head who would approach it cold (since it is loaded with the jargon of the scene and the expectation of quite a few points of reference). If the latter then most of the introduction feels like filler as all the topics (history of the Black Bloc, the composition of capital today, and the nature of modern counter-culture) are well known to anyone who would file *The Black Bloc Papers* on their shelf (that would be after Berkman and before Bookchin).

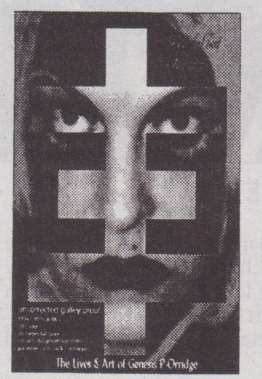
The book ends, on a very controversial note that should be examined. Through the papers, the issue seems clear that part of the trial by fire for the American Black Bloc is negotiating with the larger (and generally more "pacifistic") movement how to avoid mixed messages and erroneously bashed heads during protests. This issue seems at least partially resolved by the creation of "zones" (red, yellow, green) where at least some planning happens about arrest and aggressive police behavior. Which is why it is strange that the GMAC felt that it was appropriate to end the book (once again around 20%) with the rather bluntly titled "A Communique on tactics and organization to the Black Bloc from within the Black Bloc". By which their intention is not how to better communicate their political agenda OR how to extend the reach of the Black Bloc outside of protests (although this point is debatable and should be examined further). What is actually meant by the euphemism "tactics and organization" is—how can the Black Bloc become more like an ad hoc militia that can serve as an effective fighting force against the police. In that regard GMACers (and some ARA folk) are explicit in calling for us to improve our tactical abilities; by which they mean increased organization as a street fighting force, regular physical training, facilitation of preemptive strikes, etc. In that effort they formulate some new roles (for the Black Blocer) and a certain amount of jargon to explain it. Specifically they promote an elected tactical facilitation core to address the dearth of "a democratic tactical command structure" within Direct Action scenarios.

Each collective Affinity Group (AG) elects an acute tactical facilitator (in their terms an a-tac) who, in the larger cluster, helps elect a general tactical facilitation core (a g-tac), whose membership, by the way, is known only to trusted affinity group members, who can make "on the spot" decisions (or in their dialect "act as the facilitators of Bloc movement in such a way as it complies with the general plan of action as defined in the prior open general meeting"). All this is fine and good if your first order of concern is battling the cops on the streets in non-lethal, event driven (and remember that these events are usually only protest events against faceless bureaucrats) and directly democratic (or possibly democratic centralist) ways. But (conveniently) this book ends prior to an analysis of either the events of Genoa or of September 2001. Following which our conclusions must account for the lethal consequences of our resistance, the new unpopularity of our aims such as it is when compromised by its piggy-backing on the sea turtle/labor axis of evil) and the fact that we are anarchists and not direct (or centralist) democrats.

Which begs the question, what conclusions are the Black Bloc and GMAC drawing from these lessons? If the authorships and index are any indication, then the conclusion of the GMAC is the need for a formal organization from which to practice the local, grassroots, movement building work necessary for radical social change. Specifically, GMAC is a supporting member of NEFAC (North Eastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists), a collective-based federation currently active in North America, and many of the commentators of Black Bloc events are specifically NEFAC members. Moreover, in the history of the North American Anarchist movement over the past 20 years these analyses are directly originating from the "ARA" split in Love and Rage (a national anarchist organization that ended in the late 90s over issues of what role race politics should play in the anarchist movement and what role an anarchist organization should play in social change) and appear to be concluding in the "platformist" political articulation of NEFAC (which is a reference to a document written in the early 20th century by anarchist ex-patriots evaluating their failures in the Russian Revolution). Which brings our modern debates right into the dustbin of history.

Lenin was quite clear about the role of "fighting formations" in the transition to a communist society; our future theorists (and practitioners) of revolution would do well to learn from his lessons. Highest among these should be the complicated relationships between means, ends, and good intentions. The desire for social change is not the same thing as deserving it (which we all do) and is especially not the same thing as knowing how to get it. *The Black Bloc Papers* demonstrates this well.

—Aragorn



Painful but Fabulous: The Lives & Art of Genesis P-Orridge
200 pages
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www.softskull.com

One fine evening (perhaps) six years ago I was waiting on a friend at the top of Haight St. in San Francisco when I noticed a small guy—with a headful of hippie braids, clad in flowing Joey Buttafuouco surfer pants and puffy white athetic shoes—being interviewed by a two-man camera crew. "Looks like the dude from Throbbing Gristle", I noted, turning my attention elsewhere. Seconds later he dropped his trousers past his knees for the camera, displaying an wide assortment of genital jewelry and tattoos in the most personal of places. "It is the guy from Throbbing Gristle", I thought. There's the beginning and end of my personal involvement with the man.

If you've ever cracked a volume of the *Re/Search Industrial Culture Handbook* or *Modern Primitives*, dug into the recorded output of seminal noise-art prank Throbbing Gristle, or had truck with 1990s rave culture, then you've more than likely had your introduction to puckish iconoclast Genesis P-Orridge. My own take on his prodigious body of work (ranging from early 1970s cut-and-paste mail art, to synth-grind noise, to surrealist sculpture) is that it's always worth a look even if its merits aren't always readily apparent. Like current Simpsons, I'm glad that he's around even if I'm not paying close attention.

Born Neil Megson in Britain in 1950, P-Orridge dabbled in all manner of transgressive behavior at an early age and took part in the wild excesses late-1960s London. In the early 1970s he was chief instigator of the performance group Coum Transmissions, a performance art gang that shocked easily-offended audiences with scenes of bloodletting, casual nudity, and apocalyptic performances that involved violence, sex, and the misuse of plastic wrap. Events led to the formation of Throbbing Gristle, one of the few bands certified to have forged a genre (for good or bad) with their anti-hits such as "Hamburger Lady", "Adrenaline", and "United". While they might not always have been easy listening, TG were nothing less than geniuses at establishing a sort of mystique for themselves and earning a certain kind of dark notoriety.

Painful but Fabulous collects hundreds of pages of interviews, commentary by friends and enemies, photographs of the man during his dozens of distinct looks (ranging from long unkempt hippie dreads to cleanly-shaved cranium), as well as samples of his comics, collages, sculpture, discography, and philosophy. Within recent years he s taken to a sort of Talulah Bankhead look with bobbed hair and lipstick, a development that took me somewhat by surprise.

Painful but Fabulous works as a glimpse into what makes Mr. P-Orridge tick, and as a neat slideshow of some of his visual art. I find myself more interested in the man s influences (among them Aleister Crowley and Austin Osman Spare, two great deans of British 20th Century sorcery, but neither one of them looked anywhere near as stunning in a feather boa.

—Jeff A. Heermann

MOVIES

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI

SOUTH OF THE BORDER JUSTICE

A Latin-American **Goodfellas**? (Perhaps a cinematic Ratos de Porão?) The comparisons are flying every which way, but in the end, **City of God** is its own animal, a rough and violent look at the lost children in Brazil's lowest classes. But this is no neo-realist tome; **City of God** mainlines its plot with MTV-style editing that practically leaves a dust trail, and the striking use of the hand-held camera.

It's been said that no country has such a gaping disparity between the rich and poor as Brazil, and this film is good second-hand evidence. Rocket (Alandre Rodrigues) finds himself at the periphery of the two most powerful street gangs. He's stone-poor, but is smarter than the rest of his crowd, aspiring to be a photographer. Rocket's memories become the film's camera.

The film's standout scene occurs very early on. Rocket is standing on a dangerous stretch of ground; on one side, twenty yards away, his friends are shouting, demanding his loyalty. On the other—a wall of cops, guns cocked. For all we know, his life is as good as gone whichever way he goes—but then the camera circles 360 degrees in a fast sweep, the scene morphs, and we see Rocket as a kid, the same friends as now, except the would-be toughs have their first toy: a gun.

In the gang's early days, cops give chase across dirt streets in beat-up VW bugs, cars that can barely keep up with foot traffic. Houses are piled on one another like cardboard boxes, and cops make little distinction between good and bad guys. For them, crime-fighting is mostly a matter of containment, and with every kid they pick up, three or four new ones sprout up to take their place. The only way to move up in a gang is if someone dies, and promotion can be pretty fast.

L'il Ze Leandro (Firmino de Hora) is an old school hood, making his cash through drugs and a violent streak to rival Scarface. For him, having one boss is the only way to keep peace in the slums. (The cops don't mind, either; he pays them off and keeps most of the other gangsters out of business.) His only rival is Carrot (Sandro Cenoura), who supplements his drug trafficking with rape and murder. Friends since youth, the two young gangsters carve out their respective territories, each waiting for the right moment to invade their opponent's turf.

Rocket manages to get along with both factions by staying neutral—but that's no any guarantee of safety. When he's pissed, L'il Ze will kill anyone within shooting distance. He's ugly and probably never gets laid, and that may be part of the problem. At least that's the theory of Benny (Phelps Haagensen), generally acknowledged as the coolest guy in the circle.

Carrot's gang, on the edge of the City of God, hasn't a hope against the guns, numbers, and police protection of L'il Ze. But they do have a new recruit, "Knockout Ned" (Mane Galinha), a former bus driver who joins for personal reasons. A crack marksman while in the service, one of his bullets is worth ten of the opposition.

City of God shows off such amazing filmmaking finesse that you may not notice the film's ordinariness under the shell. But nothing can detract from its sense of immediacy, or the pains it takes in showing the poverty and crime in a city all the gods seem to have forgotten.

In 1875, premier Portuguese novelist Eca de Queiroz wrote a moral tale so true that it would have currency 125 years later, as a film. Countless church scandals later, **The Crime of Father Amaro** is now hailed as a timely (and maybe overdue) attack on the excesses of the Catholic Church.

Young Father Amaro (Gael Garcia Bernal, the popular star of **Amores Perros** and **Y Tu Mama Tambien**) has been assigned to Los Reyes, composed mostly of rustic and pious parishioners. His mentor, the local bishop (Erneesto Gomez Cruz) sees hope in the young man, which roughly translates as ambition.

Father Amaro is almost immediately popular, with or without his habit; even the mayor's wife makes a pass at him in the town square. The sole exception is the raspy-voiced town hag, a leering busybody who saves communion wafers to feed to her cats. She also likes munching on bootlegged hosts for breakfast with jam, the only possible way they'd be edible.

The padre is green, and this assignment was designed to test his mettle. His direct superior, Padre Benito (Sancho Gracia) apparently shares his bed with Sanjuanera (Angelica Aragon), who cook's the priests' meals. They even have a lovely daughter, Amelia (Ana Claudia Talancon). The Padre is heavily involved in building what he calls a medical clinic (actually, closer to a full-blown hospital), thanks to the contributions of a local narcotics cartel. In return for their support, he launders their drug money, and seems unable to see any irony in it.

On the other hand, Padre Natalio (Damian Alcazar) disappears from the parish days at a time, volunteering his services as a working priest against the drug lords and for the mountain-dwelling revolutionaries.

Father Amaro finds himself between of the two camps...or perhaps above them. As the official errand-boy of the bishop, he delivers everything from stern warnings to excommunications, all the while seemingly unaffected by any morals save for the regulations for the Church.

Or so it would seem. Pretty Amelita develops an especially strong interest in the young priest, who's much more handsome and devout than her old boyfriend, a fledgling newspaper reporter. At first, Amaro tries to squelch the romance; but before too long, he's reciting the Song of Songs while seducing the girl (who, given her mother's relationship to Padre Benito, has no illusions about their situation).

The Crime of Father Amaro apparently caused something of a stir in predominately Catholic Mexico. But most Americans, the scandals outlined here may seem more melodramatic than shocking. Not unpredictably, all the characters find their way into personal hells brought on by their faith—the one thing they hoped would save them.

After a taste of Father Amaro's version of Christian morality, you may be in the mood for a more secular voice. **Power and Terror: Noam Chomsky in Our Times** is like a post-9/11 update to the definitive Manufacturing Consent, which explored the intellectual's theories at much greater length.

MRR has been a longtime supporter of the MIT linguist's views (he was featured on *MRR*'s *New World Order* 45). Here, Chomsky plays to overflow audiences in several cities, in the hope of explaining why we find ourselves in such an intractable foreign policy mess—and how we can get out.

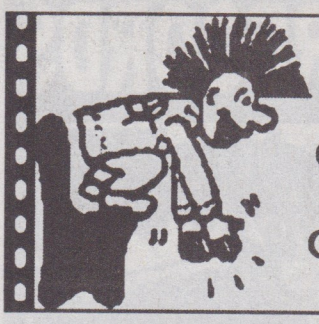
At 73, Chomsky still exudes that mix of fervency and humanism that's been his trademark since his early protests against the Vietnam War. Dressed in Ivy league tweeds sans tie, with a shock of hair that doesn't abide by any rules of containment, his message is fairly simple: there can be no war on terrorism if it's waged by its main exporter. When US-funded or operated actions result in the death of thousands overseas, he notes, we tend to turn a deaf ear. On our soil, it's grounds for war.

Chomsky calmly dismantles concepts like the "Axis of Evil," which includes South Korea only to make it seem as if it has nothing to do with religion (or oil). He doesn't let us forget that George Bush had no qualms about Saddam Hussein's human rights abuses as long as the oil pipeline was secure, and how the United States' alliance with Turkey (bought with guns and money) has been secured without any thought to that country's continued atrocities against the northern Kurds.

Chomsky concludes that the best way to stop terrorism is to stop participating in it.

Despite it all, Chomsky enunciates a real affection for the United States (albeit not for its policies)—and for the possibilities for freedom of inquiry and expression that make films like this possible.

Comments? Email me at sjspinali@yahoo.com.



BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

FORCE MAJEURE

I can't decide whether I'm cynical or conciliatory. On one hand, I am very negative. On the other, I tend to easily accept most people's idiosyncrasies. Of course, there are still people I can't stand, but I just don't get people whose whole way of life is constantly putting others down. Ironically writing in their zine in which they gladly accept advertising and advice columns from the same person who earlier they decreed should simply give it up. It's like Mr. T said on *The Simpsons*: "I pity the fool who derives his self-esteem from making fun of another person's appearance." The audience attending the screening of **Chain Camera** (www.chaincamera.com) seemed to be there to laugh at a bunch of high schoolers. The theater was packed with what I initially assumed were all college students. After the film they all looked like the high school kids in the film.

Chain Camera has an interesting premise. Ten Los Angeles high school students get a video camera to document their lives. After a week, the camera is passed on to ten more kids. The whole process goes on for a year. The students can show any aspect of their lives they want. There are a great variety of people, as you would expect in a California public school. There are many different opinions on the important topics of youth. Everyone comes across as open and honest, more so than I would expect teenagers to be. Aren't teenagers supposed to be insecure? The wrestler is up front about how he wants to meet a girl. In fact, several times he reminds the audience that he is single. Mena admits that she hates Mexicans because "they think they are white." Manuel states that "the majority of people in this world are stupid. It's true." I expect teenagers to be a little bit ignorant about things, but everyone is so assured of their opinion, it seems kind of odd. Maybe I just forget what it is like to be seventeen.

There are a few moments with a true voyeuristic quality. Alan is showing Lisa how to give a blow job, demonstrating the technique with a banana. He shows her how to put on the condom. Then he is trying to get her to put her mouth on the banana while he holds it at crotch level. She is laughing hysterically and won't do it. Then she picks up the banana and innocently tries to get him to do it. Stephanie and her father seem like a perfect family. Yet, when we are first introduced to her dad he keeps repeating, "What a fuckin' bitch." It's all that comes out of his mouth. Stephanie yells at him to stop. Initially this may not seem like a great environment for a teenage girl, but the more you get to see their interaction you realize that she is lucky to have such a great father.

The thing that keeps me from just sitting back and enjoying **Chain Camera** is that I am constantly wondering what was left out. Is this truly the portrait of today's youth, when a much older man, director Kirby Dick, is the one who decided what is presented and what was cut? The ending of prom and graduation seems to be tacked on. It compromises the idea behind the film, of this being a week in each person's life. Still, the class valedictorian gives one the best graduation speeches I have ever heard. She isn't afraid to call out the hypocrisies of the faculty. Maybe the high school students of 1999 come across as more self-assured because they know more about the world than I did when I was seventeen.

Morvern Callar is the story of the title character, who discovers her boyfriend has committed suicide on Christmas Day. In the opening shot she sits on the floor gently caressing his body for a few minutes before it is revealed that he is dead. Morvern seems in denial, perhaps so consumed with grief she is unable to comprehend what is going on. She is barely able to read the note he has left. She walks to the train station under the pretense of making a telephone call. She hesitates. The phone rings. She is alone on the platform, but the caller is insistent that the person he wants is there. The caller then begins to question Morvern as to what she is doing there. She simply states she was going to make a call. She doesn't.

Instead she goes to a party and drowns her sorrows in drugs and booze. It is easy to assume that she is callous, but how are you supposed to act when a person who you are intimately involved with kills himself? I feel it is impossible for anyone who has not been in this situation to be able to understand what the Morvern is going through. Suicide is a very selfish act and reacting the way Morvern does makes sense whether you agree with it or not.

Morvern finally gets up the courage to read her boyfriend's suicide note. "Sorry Morvern. Don't try to understand. It just seemed like the right thing to do. I love you." He leaves money for his funeral and a finished novel he wants her to get published for him. This small scene doesn't explain anything to Morvern and dumps a bunch of responsibility on her. She is seething with guilt and anger. Morvern buries his body herself, sends off his manuscript with her name replacing his and uses his funeral money for a trip to Spain.

Morvern then begins an attempt to reconcile herself with what has happened. She sees an opportunity to change her direction in life. She never tells anyone that her boyfriend is dead. She mentions to her friend Lanna that he has left. Lanna assures her that he will return giving us the assumption that he has run off before. Later we discover he has cheated on Morvern with Lanna. Since we never get to know the boyfriend except through present events, I would assume he has a lot more secrets that could eventually turn up.

Having been through a similar situation, I know I react more personally to **Morvern Callar** than others would. The film seems so honest. It is subtle and depressing, yet life-affirming. I'm sure I wouldn't have reacted the same way as Morvern, but I can understand why she did.

In another world, but coincidentally also in Spain, **Lost In La Mancha** follows the misadventures of Terry Gilliam's attempt to make a film. The film, **The Man Who Killed Don Quixote**, was never finished—here is the story why.

Gilliam had been trying to make a film of Don Quixote for years. The film starts out with the presumption that the project is automatically doomed from the beginning citing Orson Welles' attempt at making the film. There is some great footage of Welles' film, which he worked on for fifteen years whenever he got some money, and which was eventually abandoned when the actor Francisco Reiguera died.

Gilliam's film goes about the same route. He has a hard time getting money due to his reputation for being a difficult director. He finally manages to find some European investors who come up with $32 million. It is less than he needs for the extravaganza he has planned, but he decides to go with it anyway. He finds the perfect Quixote in 71-year-old Jean Rochefort. Rochefort has been preparing for the role for two years. He even spent seven months learning English to play the part.

Gilliam and his crew start working on the pre-production. Things seem to move along smoothly. The first major obstacle is not being able to have easy access to the actors. Since the production has a tight budget, the actors have agreed to lower salaries than normal. They also have to shoot around their existing schedules. There is no time for rehearsals before they begin shooting.

Then the real problems with the film start. There is a sudden storm that floods the first set, destroying everything and changing the makeup of the location. Then fighter planes fly over the set from the nearby bombing range, the noise ruining shots. Then Rochefort is diagnosed with prostate and back problems. The film trudges on, with the hope that they will be able to complete the film when Rochefort returns. He is delayed for days and then weeks. Finally, Gilliam gives in to the fact that even if Rochefort returns, he will not be able to ride the horse that is present in almost every scene.

It must be extremely frustrating to have been trying to get this project going and then when it is so close, to have it all end suddenly, but Gilliam comes off as a jerk. You can see how hard everyone is working to get things the way he wants it. He treats the people working for him like they don't really matter. He has to realize that without these people he'd never get any of his films made. In one scene, some designers are making life-size marionettes to fight against Quixote. He explains that he wants Quixote's hand to go through the puppet. He exasperatedly says, "I don't understand why his hand can't go through the puppet," treating the designers like they are children. When the crew is finally told that production has been called off, Gilliam doesn't even have the courtesy to show up and thank them. One of the crew members asks the camera, "What I want to know is, where is the director?" Gilliam is off sulking with the assistant director.

Sometimes I wish I didn't have this personal knowledge of people like Terry Gilliam. He does have a tendency to come across as too smug and self-important. He's always playing up the angle that he is the little man being crushed by the big man. I'd rather just enjoy his films for what they are.

I hope **The Man Who Killed Don Quixote** eventually gets made. The footage that was shot and shown in **Lost In La Mancha** looks like it would make a great film.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to me c/o MRR PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. You can also reach me by email at carolynmrr@juno.com

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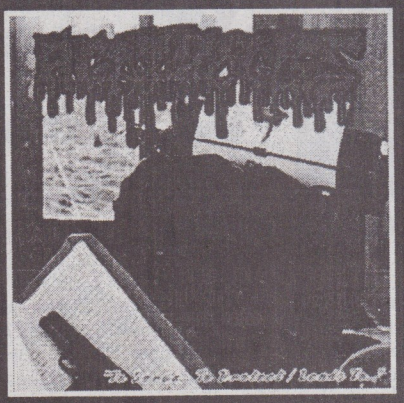

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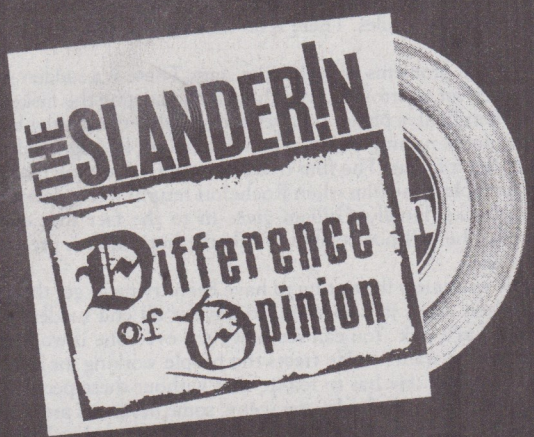

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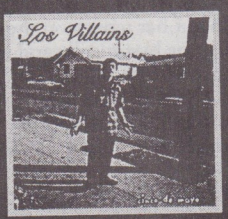

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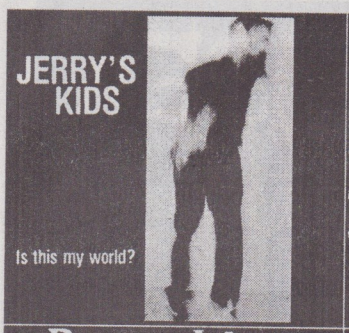

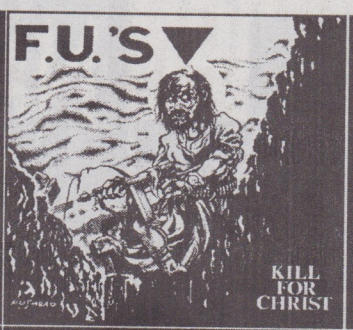

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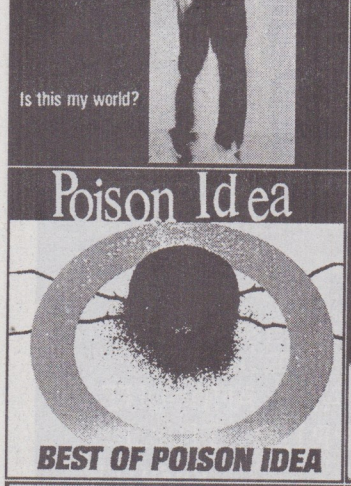

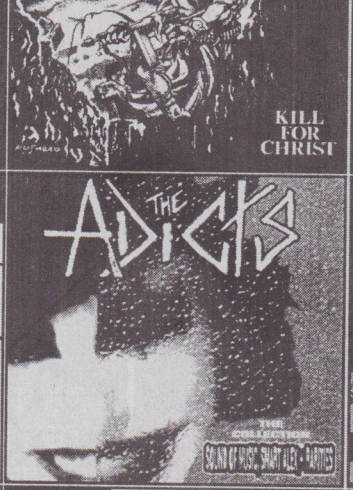

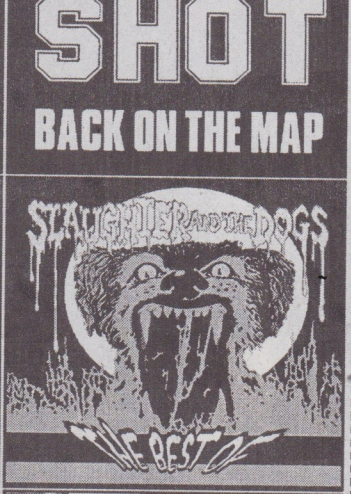

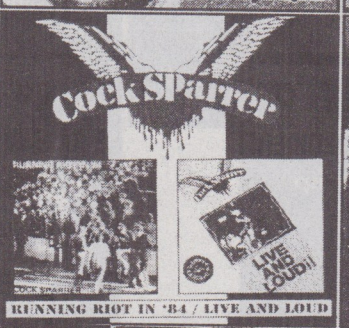

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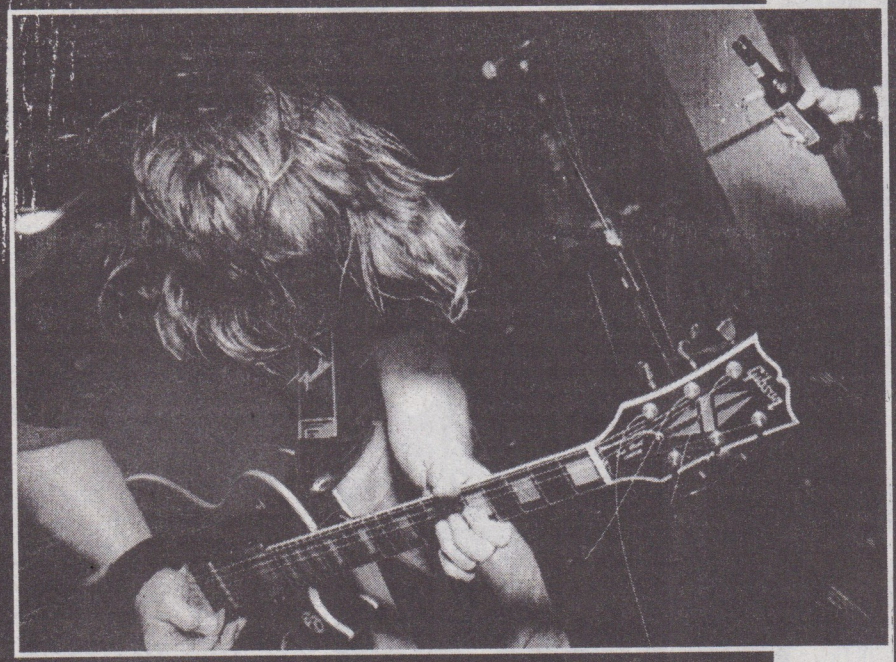

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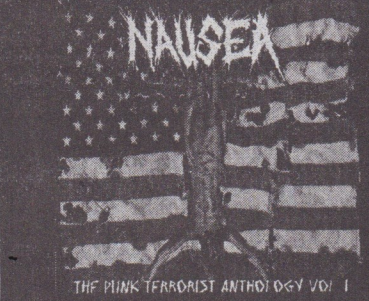

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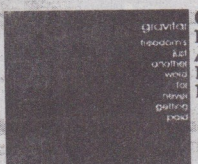

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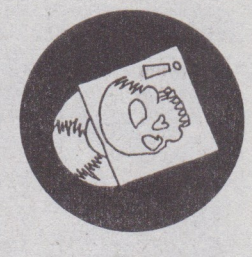

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101'ERS - "Beat Music Dynamite" LP

Different versions of five songs, live and outtakes, from Joe Strummer's 1975-6 outfit. "Sweet Revenge" and "Keys to Your Heart" are similar to *London Calling*-era CLASH, but a little sweeter and less punchy—very worth owning for any CLASH fan. Other songs, like "Surf City," sound more like early 60s psych/garage stuff. This is a nice collection, too—no garbage included. (AC)
(Andalucia, no address)

A FEAST OF SNAKES - "Killing Time" LP

Rough-handed adrenaline-driven blues recorded with the lowest-possible fidelity. You know what I'm talkin' about. A FEAST OF SNAKES are speaking from an adolescent holding pen of their own design. I hear it in "Kill Your Boyfriend" and "Own Me", a real desperate flail teenage flail. *Killing Time* successfully grafts urban blues to the mimumum daily requirement of punk rock *chutzpah*. The whole package sounds, feels and feels way familiar: I'm hearing OBLIVIANS, REATARDS, LOW LITE, BAD TIMES, and any number of other down-and-dirty rock 'n' roll combos. Still, member A. Cuervo has paid his dues in some of those bands (I know that much) and it's better than what's on television. (JH)
(In the Red, 1118 W. Magnolia B, PO Box 208, Burbank, CA 91506)

ADEQUATE SEVEN - "Songs of Innocence and of Experience" CD

Great lyrics dealing with politics, lousy ska-tinged music with hip hop and punk overtones. This should have been a spoken word record. (JF)
(Household Name, PO Box 12286, London, SW9 6FE ENGLAND)

GG ALLIN - "Public Animal No.1" EP

.....ah, old GG.....now this is the ticket....!!! These are the years that GG was at his best. This re-ish features "You Hate Me and I Hate You," "Automatic," and the classic "Assface".....!!!! Totally fantastic shit here.....good sound quality...scratch and sniff cover....smells like GG's upper lip after sex....personally signed by his butthole....! Also contains three original oil beads straight outta the blackheads of GG's noise....whatta DEAL!!!!! (SW)
(Orange, 639 Broadway, Box 902, New York, NY 10012)

ALMOST THERE - "She Was Like, and I Was All..." CD

If BAD RELIGION were my favorite band, ALMOST THERE would be on a poster above my bed. Every night, I would gaze at their styles and paint my toenails. (MM)
(Bitch Slap, PO Box 952, Gover Beach, CA 93483)

AMBULANCE - "Words" EP

Great Swedish hardcore punk with tense melody that builds and builds with the assistance of two guitars. You wouldn't peg the rough (but intelligible) vocals for female—they're just high enough to offset the heaviness, especially when the band descends into a slow-down (not a break-down), effectively, at the end of "Control." The English lyrics didn't particularly grab me, but musically, this is top of the line. (AC)
(Busted Heads, Box 275, 901 06 Umea, SWEDEN, www.ds13.com)

AMERICAN DREAM - "Punk Will Rise Again" CD

This is total crap. Off the top of my head I can name several problems I have with this band: they are trying to look and sound like the STITCHES but in an obnoxiously cute way, they have song titles like "Punk Will Rise Again," and "Junkie Princes (A Fairy Tale Hell)," and they are fucking cheesy nerds. This wouldn't be bad if they didn't try so fucking hard to be tough. Nice try, dick noses. (BM)
(Mugshot, 1836 Humbolt Blvd. 2A, Chicago, IL 60647)

ANFO - "La Sangre De Latinoamerica Luche y Resiste" EP

Wow. Hailing from Lima, Peru—ANFO bring us five tracks of quick paced, dual vocaled, burly hardcore punk. Super rough recording complements their snarling D-beat fueled assault. Reminds me a bit of personal favorites APATIA NO!—especially on the song "Multinacionales Asesinas." Fans of US hardcore bands like DEATHREAT or BALANCE OF TERROR should take note for certain. Excellent. (MT)
(Where's Your Anger?, PO Box 471, Boston, MA 02134, wheresyourangerpunk@yahoo.com)

AMERICAN STEEL - "Middle of the Night" EP

This clever single is a part of the Fat Wreck Chords singles club. Without exception, if you were a AMERICAN STEEL fan, you'll be nostalgic and satisfied with this much-delayed release. (MM)
(Fat Wreck Chords, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.fatwreck.com)

L'AMICO DI MARTUCCI - "Non Val Saper A Chi Fortuna Ha Contra" EP

Seven songs of thrash from Italy, nothing very original, but well-played and fun to skateboard to, no doubt. The most ear-catching song, strangely, was the instrumental. Some lyrics in Italian, some in Spanish, with English translations. "Invierno Y Verano," about skating and thrashing in the ice and snow, was a winner: "I am freezing, let's smoke a joint, you're not tired? I'll try another trick, I'm still bleeding, you'll see that I take it." Awesome. (AC)
(625, PO Box 423413, San Francisco, CA 94142)

AMMUNITION - "A Long Walk Forever" EP

I would be doing this review an injustice without mentioning AMERICAN NIGHTMARE. Similar lyrical construct, similar vocal style. The production is a lot more raw and the vocals are little more gruff, which is a plus. The cover art was done by Linas Garsys, who did artwork for AMERICAN NIGHTMARE, SHARK ATTACK, and a lot of other East Coast bands. I know this record has been out for quite some time, so I am not sure if this band is still around. If this sounds like your cup of tea, then drink it up. (CC)
(Western Front, 1812 11th St, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266)

ANTIGAMA - "Intellect Made us Blind" CD

I'm having a hard time finding bands to compare this Polish tech metal/grind band to, and that's always a good thing. This is really solid grind with a lot of variety to the riffs. There's almost an industrial edge to a lot of this, which normally I wouldn't say to recommend something, but it's quite positive in this case. The guitars and drums have a clinical precision to them and there's all sorts of bizarre things going on with the guitars—odd, slashing metallic sounds, like forming riffs out of Arnold getting pulverized at the end of *The Terminator*. The blasts are intense as fuck, and are all the more effective in that it's not just constant speed—there are tons of doomier repetitive slow parts and odd time changes, and then whammo—they hit you with the grind and it's relentless. Really one of the best metal/grind bands I've heard in a while, like a mixture of NEUROSIS, KALIBAS, CEPHALIC CARNAGE, NAILBOMB, and 324, to give you a confusing idea. (EL)
(The Flood, c/o MBE 180, Piazza Caiazzo 3, 20124 Milano, ITALY, theflood@katamail.com)

ANTISEEN - "Noise for the Sake of Noise" LP

Fuzzy rock from Charlotte, North Carolina played with a lot of aggro. This was apparently already released in 1989 in Australia and is re-released for you thanks to TKO. I was never a big fan. It's just too rock for me, too much long hair man, but I must say it's not bad. It will definitely annoy your parents in ways that the current crop of limp American punk cannot, for that alone it gets a thumbs up. Fuck the police. (AD)
(TKO, 3126 W.Cart. #303 Richmond, VA. 23221)

ATOM AND HIS PACKAGE - "Attention! Blah Blah Blah" CD

The return of the pop miester whom all the punks love because his songs are so damn funny. Another great batch of drum machine based songs with heavy guitar driving them home. A sampling of song titles this time around include "Does Anyone Else In The Room Want To Marry His Or Her Own Grandmother?" and "Dear Atom, You Do Not Want Children. Love, Atom". Yet another great pop full-length from this one-man band. This shit is so catchy it could be on a Dodge commercial. (RL)
(Hopeless)

BACKWOOD CREATURES - "Living Legends" CD

Stardumb does it yet again. Another fine release. The BACKWOOD CREATURES have ditched their QUEERS sound and matured a bit. The songwriting is a whole lot better and it's got all the hooks in the right places. Goddamn, I can't think of what this sounds like. It's just a catchy punk rock record with melody borrowed from all over the place and deep vocals that aren't even the slightest bit tough-guy, and lots of harmonies and group sing-alongs. Check it out for yourself, then help me review this when you're done. (BM)
(Stardumb, PO Box 21145, 3001 AC Rotterdam, NETHERLANDS, www.stardumbrecords.com)

BARSE - "They Said It Couldn't Happen Here" LP

The 7" on Rapid Pulse was the first thing I heard by this UK band. It is great—you should buy it. Very STIFF LITTLE FINGERS/NEWTOWN NEUROTICS without sounding like a carbon-copy band, *quite* difficult to pull off with this type of sound. This LP continues in the same vein, suffering slightly from samey-sounding production, but that is just typical for the guitar-raunch-phobic island from which these lads hail. Always good to hear snarled English vox. In the garage '77 punk world, this is probably the best band out of the UK since the ARMITAGE SHANKS. The songs are good and I have no doubt at all that they would be really fun in a small club in, I dunno, Leeds or somewhere. See ya in *Leeds*! (RW)
(Hell's Tone, V.Hellsten, Niputtajankatu 12 B 3, 57510, FINLAND, www.lprhardcore.net/htr)

BARSERDS - "Pushy Polemics"CD

While listening to this record, one might consider picking the hairs from the bottom of their shower drain. After that activity, one might throw away their cowboy boots and three-chord progression boring songs, and toss this record towards their neighbor's window like a tin can of tuna, dolphin-unfriendly like. Rock 'n' roll, from Germany. (MM)
(Trash, PO Box 10 16 53 D-46216 Bottrop, GERMANY)

BATHTUB SHITTER - "97 + 3 Shit Points" EP

Repress of this great Japanese grind band's first demo from '97 plus some extra songs. Although the sound is of course a bit rougher, it still sounds really good, and even then they had their bizarre approach to riffs, lyrics, and insane vocal tradeoffs pretty well down. Great blasts and brutal breakdowns, and I swear these guys have the best fucking lyrics on the planet. Goddamn, I love this band. Find a place in your heart for the Bathtub Shitting Machine. (EL)
(Power it Up, Postfach 1114, 38156 Vechelde, GERMANY, www.power-it-up.de)

BEER FOR BREAKFAST/BUNNIES ON STRIKE - split EP

It's amazing when two bands, both equally impressive, from drastically separate genres, can share the same piece of vinyl so well. BEER FOR BREAKFAST scream my shoelaces into knots, like SCOTT BAIO, while BUNNIES ON STRIKE croon away the passion of loneliness, like CYPHER IN THE SNOW. Go Holland! (MM)
(Wasted Youth Power c/o G. Davelaor-Smarogd, 11- 1703 GA Heerhugowood, NETHERLANDS)

BIG D & THE KIDS TABLE - "The Gipsy Mili EP" CD

I see it is now my turn to review a BIG D & THE KIDS TABLE record. "Oh joy," as Stimpy would say. For

ska-punk, this is better than average, but the horns are so prominent that it gets really obnoxious. It must be really difficult to find something else for horn players to do other than just play ridiculous melodic lines over and over again. If you really miss SLAPSTICK, go for it. I've moved on. (MX)
(Fork in Hand, PO Box 230023, Boston, MA 02123, www.forkinhand.com)

BIG JOHN BATES - "My Stiki" CD

It's like this—if you think the last couple of CRAMPS records were "OK, but not as good as their early stuff," but you bought 'em anyway, then you will have no problem warming up to this particular rootsy group. Super clean production, tiki obsessions, bad nurses, stand-up bass, they're Canadian...you get the picture. Kooky for 1959 via modern technology!! (RW)
(Devil Sauce, Dept 20, 601 Bute St, Vancouver, BC, V6E 3M2, CANADA)

BLANCHE DAVIDIAN - "Attack of the Killer" CD

Their puns kill me. Every title has some sorta play on words, but when they get down to the rock, they get down to business. BD's driving beats, oodling guitars, persistent tambourine, and heavily reverbed vocals crank out some catchy anthems, classic rock, and twisted walls of sound. At times I hear HÜSKER DÜ, JANE'S ADDICTION, and QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE. Good. (HM)
(Exquisite Swine, no address)

THE BLINDING LIGHT - "Glass Bullet" EP

Crunchy distorted guitars, screaming hoarse vocals, double kick drum attack, chugga-chugga lines; all this adds up to some grind-influenced hardcore that really doesn't do too much for me at this moment. It's thick-sounding, it's near-violent, it's got plenty of metal-influenced leads, it could be the next thing you get into. (WM)
(Init, PO Box 3432, Mankato, MN 56002, www.initrecords.net)

BLUE ROSE LIAR - "When Shadows Swallow Shadows" CD

One time I was really hung over and someone tried to make me listen to a band that sounded like this one, and it made me puke again. Like a nauseous nightmare, these songs make me feel dizzy and hateful. I like that. I also like DEAD AND GONE. You should too. (MM)
(www.blueroseliar.com)

BOOKS LIE - "Empathy" EP

Although I have a hard time keeping up with most of the hardcore bands on the East Coast, I have tried to keep my eye on BOOKS LIE and I have to say this record does not disappoint. Only a couple of songs but they have come a long way since their first album. It's not so much a stylistic change—they've just gotten better at it. At times, the songs sound similar to NATIVE NOD (especially on the B-side) but they throw in the fast parts that the previous band didn't. Their sound brings you back to the early 90s, but they are able to do it without sounding outdated. (PA)
(Carmen Diablo, PO Box 13.036, 46080 Valencia, SPAIN, http:/carmendiablo.cjb.net)

BRAINOIL - "Dark Eyes of My Past" LP

Local boys BRAINOIL kick out the jams with this seven-song release. They follow down a path laid out by sludge kings like GRIEF and EYEHATEGOD as the black tar oozes ever so nicely from their amps and into your ears. Slow, heavy, and mean with dark, depressing lyrics that go with this style of music oh so well. I have caught them live a couple of times and they never fail to get my head banging with their growling assault. Check this shit out! (RC)
(Life Is Abuse, PO Box 20524, Oakland, CA 94620, www.lifeisabuse.com)

BRODY'S MILITIA/THE CRUNKY KIDS - "Ohio Skullcrushers Union" EP

Two bands from the Buckeye State. Speedy distorted punk from CRUNKY KIDS with male/female vocals blurting songs about terrorists, money, and being angry. BRODY'S MILITIA delivers loud thrash with screeching lyrics about whisky, war, and a punk shop turned porn store. Sorry, but nothing too special here. (SR)
(Distort Ohio, 818 North Metcalf St, Lima, OH 45801)

BUMP-N-UGLIES - "The All American 4 Pack" EP

These kings of wrestling rock continue to pad their repertoire with four more macho ditties. Included is a cover of GG's "Don't Talk to Me" and a porno anthem that'll certainly get the UGLIES fans into that WWE frenzy. Mischievous, macho, and masterful. To fully understand, see 'em live. (HM)
($4 ppd: Chuck Nagy/Low Down, PO Box 4502, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-4502, www.bumpnuglies.com)

BURN YOUR BRIDGES - LP

Debut LP from these Los Angeles punx which brings to mind fond memories of the early Slap-A-Ham catalog. Imagine one part INFEST, one part CROSSED OUT and even one part ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT and you start to get a feel for what this two man hardcore unit can do. Bitter biting and brutally honest lyrics which match the violently powerful thrash quite well. Let's hope we see more. (MT)
(Burn Your Bridges, PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510)

BURY THE LIVING - "Bathed in Blood and Climbing Over the Dead" EP

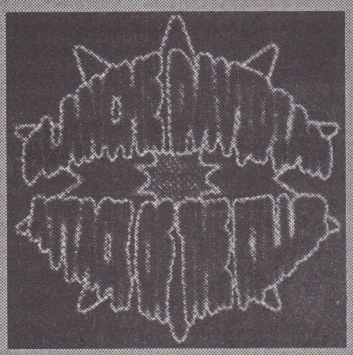
Powerful head splitting hardcore from Memphis, TN. Six tracks of "I'm mad-as-hell-and-I'm-not-going-to-take-it-anymore" style thrashy punk that brings to mind NEGATIVE FX, COPOUT and The FIX. Best song title of the month—"Your Colors May Not Run But I'll Bet They Fucking Burn." Amazing. (MT)
(Kangaroo, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA. Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS, tyson@xs4all.nl)

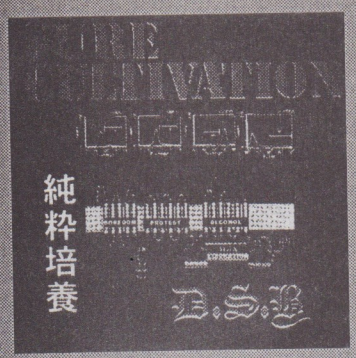
CARPENTER ANT/ATARI - split EP

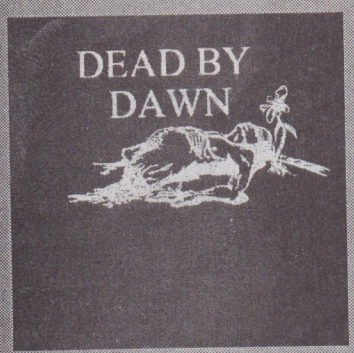
No, ATARI didn't get back together. What we have here is a previously unreleased song called "Joystick Fury," which according to the liner notes was the first song ATARI ever wrote. ATARI belonged to a core group of straight edge bands (almost exclusively from the East Coast of the US) who started reviving the fast straight edge hardcore sound, bringing a much needed breath of fresh air in an otherwise stagnant metal hardcore scene. So in other words, the song is not essential, but if you're a fan of the 1996-'97 era of straight edge hardcore, then you won't be disappointed. On the flipside of the record we have CARPENTER ANT. I like these songs a lot better than the songs off their debut 7" I reviewed last year. I am not sure whether this is a better recording, or they just improved as songwriters. Regardless, CARPENTER ANT execute the quirky, screamy hardcore sound really well. I even like the wanking guitar parts. Too bad there is no lyrics. (CC)
(Union City, 76 West Market St, Bethlehem, PA 18018)

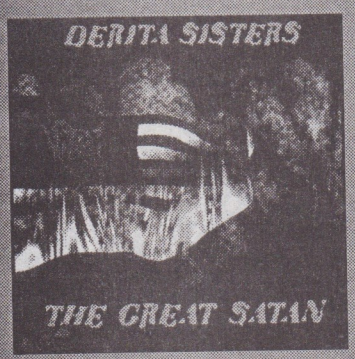
THE CAUSE/BY THE GRACE OF GOD - split EP

This shit sucks. Didn't we have to suffer through enough chugga-chugga Victory Records baggy-pants bullshit in the mid 90s? The CAUSE is late period AGNOSTIC FRONT-inspired dude-core from Encinitas. "Discussion









of Termination" is an "open minded" song about abortion—uh huh..."death toll is on the rise?" Take a hike. BY THE GRACE OF GOD—is it possible they are still around?—waits 25 counts of "haunting" intro before kicking in with the rhythm section, and then they're out of tune. And man, the poetry...obsequious? Give me a fucking break. (AC)
(Tear It Down, PO Box 230722, Encinitas, CA 92023)

COUNTERBLAST - "Impassivity" 2xLP

So slow and entrancing that it's almost painful... just the intro into the first song is nearly five minutes long, but it's so completely worth the wait. These ten songs (seven new, and three from compilations) are powerful almost beyond belief. Strings and keyboards and samples, and always plodding deliberately forward to crush your skull. COUNTERBLAST fall somewhere in between DYSTOPIA and NEUROSIS, but on this release (a few years in the making) they've started down a road that is distinctly their own, and have outdone even their past releases, which are fucking brilliant. For those who like to get pummeled...over and over again. (WN)
(Putrid Filth Conspiracy, Box 7092, 200 42 Mälmo, SWEDEN, counterblastmail@yahoo.se)

THE CRUSH/HEADS & BODIES - split EP

I believe this is the same CRUSH that just put out an album on Adeline. I heard the album once and thought it sucked pretty hard. The CRUSH's two songs on this EP are much better than I remember their LP being. It's definitely still on the more uninspired side of modern emo-influenced melodic punk, and the singer's voice is hell of annoying, but the songs are fairly intricate, and the production isn't too slick. Overall, pretty enjoyable. HEADS & BODIES are more chaotic and screamier, but they have this fucking kazoo-sounding thing in the right speaker that gives both songs this weird new wave feel. There's no trace of passion anywhere, and it's just not my thing. (MX)
(Blood of the Young, PO Box 14411, Minneapolis, MN 55414, www.blood-of-the-young.com)

D.S.B. - "Pure Cultivation" EP

I've been seeing the D.S.B. name around a bit these days and this is the first time that I've had the pleasure of listening to them. My opinion: I like D.S.B. They vaguely remind me of slightly thrashier *Victim In Pain* era AGNOSTIC FRONT. I definitely would like to hear more from these young Japanese lads. Good stuff. (WM)
(Partners In Crime, 4507 N. Gantenbein, Portland, OR 97217)

DEAD BODIES EVERYWHERE - "Buy a Bullet, Rent a Gun" CD

Local grindmasters DEAD BODIES EVERYWHERE may have broken up, but not before they left behind this five-song crusher to flatten your eardrums. DEAD BODIES EVERYWHERE pull in a variety of styles from pummeling speed to slow pulsing grind and pack this fucker full of blistering rage and aggression. The occasional stop-start time changes kept me on my toes and Jason's crazed vocal range made my throat hurt just listening to them. Check this bucketful of brutality out now! And don't forget to check out the bonus live footage that was added onto this multi-media CD. (RC)
(Intolerant Messiah, Box 6162, San Mateo, CA 94403, www.intolerantmessiah.com)

DEAD BY DAWN - "Apocalyptic Karma" EP

Pissed hardcore that would not have been out of place in the early 1990s East Bay scene. Bands like FILTH and later GRIMPLE (not the awful reformed GRIMPLE, but rather LOGICAL NONSENSE split-era GRIMPLE) certainly come to mind. Most of this stuff is slower to mid tempo and DEAD BY DAWN avoid most of the trappings of generic hardcore, making this EP (the vinyl version of their demo) kinda refreshing—although "refreshing" isn't exactly the word that comes to mind when you hear the singer snarl. Looking forward to more stuff from this band. (WN)
(Born To Die, 1904 NW 31st St, Oklahoma City, OK 73118, deadbydawn13@yahoo.com)

THE DEAD CITY REBELS - "Trashed—Rare & Unreleased 1997-2001" LP

Have I heard of the DEAD CITY REBELS? Should I have? Don't know—let's find out. What we've got here is a sort of retro or overview of their brief four-year life. The first side was recorded in 1997, and while the songs certainly have some hook and energy, the recording just ain't all that great. The production on side two ('98, '99 and '00) is much better and allows you to listen to the songs, rather than the recording. It's good stuff. It's mid-tempo to faster paced punk rock 'n' roll, played with enthusiasm. Hell, they even throw in a horn section every once in a while. Comparisons to NEW BOMB TURKS and the DEVIL DOGS are accurate, if a little ambitious. So this is good stuff and all, but c'mon, you could count how many years these guys were around on one hand. And they just split up a couple of years ago. Did we really need a "retro" record? (KK)
(High Society Intl., St. Petersburgerstr. 4, 18107 Rostock, GERMANY)

DEAD KINGS - "For All Those Hot Black Chicks" CD

OK, from the cover to the song titles I was poised with my bat to smash this thing to pieces; then the barking MENTORS-styled vocals stomped out of the headphones laying on the review room floor. The bat quivered. Maybe I was in the mood for a BLOODY MESS & THE SCABS tribute record? The bat fell back an inch. A couple more songs charged out, totally by-the-numbers metal junk studded with punk flavors. The vocals now grated like a sclerotic bum's. Fuck that fucking bum. The bat smashed and smashed... (RW)
(Scat Boy, PO Box 9680, Charlotte, NC, 29299-9680, www.thedeadkings.com)

THE DEAD ONES - LP

This Swedish outfit combine raving vocals reminiscent of RAW POWER with flexible, stop-on-a-dime HC guitar work to make for a set of tunes with incredible immediacy. The intense, change-of-pace "Discriminated" exploits their style the best, though rougher production would have enhanced the band's power. Played at full blast, it's great for moshing around in your bedroom. (SS)
(Gloom, PO Box 14253, Albany, NY 12212)

DEAD THINGS - "Because Sometimes You Just Want to Ride Your Bike to the Show" CD

It's about time someone used this long overdue title for a CD! But seriously, these guys are a charming mix of DILLINGER 4 and the GRUMPIES. You know youth, rough production, and enthusiasm. This band blazes through 15 tracks of catchy songs with many a guitar hook. An up and comer worth checking out. (RL)
(Slave, PO Box 10093, Greensboro, NC 27404, www.slavemagazine.com/deadthings)

THE DEAL - "Pretty Words, Better Days" CD

Fast and aggressive "modern" hardcore with huge youth crew choruses during the breakdowns. This is good for what it is, but I don't think we need *another* AMERICAN NIGHTMARE clone. Next. (CC)
(Sobermind, PO Box 206, 8500 Kortrijk, BELGIUM)

DEATH IN GRACELAND - "Come On, Touch Me" CD

Not punk rock in the strictest sense of the word—more like intense indie rawk. Pissed singer is ranting on top of spidery guitar leads that scream "San Diego 1992!" Not bad stuff at all, but this kind of super-competent RFTC-style stuff was never my cuppa. (RW)
(Formula 47, www.deathingraceland.com)

DEATH TRUCK - "Next to Nothing" EP

An odd obsession with trucks and death brings us these four songs of dark, and gloomy, yet somewhat melodic hardcore. At times it's too drawn out and long for my tastes. For a few seconds, a little over-dramatic and cheesy. But for the most part, solid and fast, with nice changes. The JAWBREAKRER to ECONOCHRIST crossover thing they've got going on is actually pretty cool... Worth checking out. (VH)
(1828 Marshall St. NE #4, Minneapolis, MN 55418)

DERITA SISTERS/COCKROACH CANDIES - split EP

Mmmmmm, totally.... DERITA SISTERS are sleazy to the max. Oh, my God, I am so impressed by "Fuckmobile" and their wit... I would say more but I just don't care. Fuck this side. COCKROACH CANDIES are more of the same but a little catchier, and the female backups are a nice touch. (BM)
(Trash 2001, PO 101653, D-46216, Bottrop, GERMANY, www.trash2001.de, info@trash2001.de)

DERITA SISTERS - "The Great Satan" CD

Some high velocity punk rock and roll here. The chords all work together with each other. RAMONES meet MOTÖRHEAD. Melodic guitar leads. There's a funny song about how the CLASH shouldn't do a reunion. There is just so much of this stuff to wade through. I want to die. (WR)
(Trash 2001, PO Box 10 16 53, D-46216 Bottrop, GERMANY, www.trash2001.de)

DESTROY - "Discography 1990-1994" CD

This is a song-for-song reissue of the *Necropolis* CD originally released on Sound Polution back when, except that it now has a different cover (I preferred the *Necropolis* cover, personally) and new liner notes, as well a new booklet layout. DESTROY, for those just now coming aboard, were a raging powerhouse of violent political hardcore crust, like DOOM, DISRUPT, and EXTREME NOISE TERROR, that were active in the early 1990s, and most notably featured Felix Havoc (Havoc Records, Code 13, *MRR/Heartattack* columnist) on vocals. Their music still stands the test of time well and for those of you out there not familiar with them, this is pretty much where to go. (WM)
(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.havocrex.com)

DIALTONES - "Four Last Blasts" EP

Four tracks from this now-kaput combo, issued posthumously. Based on this evidence, the DIALTONES were a loudmouth band of roughskins, reminding me more than a little of rock 'n' drek like the CANDYSNATCHERS and/or WEAKLINGS. Good sounds to shave your palms by. Best liner note: "write the DIALTONES at: you know what? Don't bother." (JH)
(Rapid Pulse, PO Box 5075, Milford, CT 04640)

DISASTER - "La Casa De La Caca" EP

Sweden's DISASTER ain't no fucking picnic... This 11-song EP is an absolutely brutal, wall-of-noise, grind assault. Liner notes lead me to believe that it was all done by two guys. Watch out, this is some dangerous shit. (VH)
(Sounds of Betrayal, Box 7092, 200 42 Mälmo, Sweden, www.grind-core.com)

DISCIDER - "Drinking to Forget the Future" EP

A name can say a lot about a band. If you're the kind of person who thinks you could be into a band named DISCIDER, this four-song EP may be perfect for you. I, on the other hand, found it to be tired, predictable crust. The lyrics to "George the Ripper" were great,but I'd personally be way more into something that had some passion and intensity to it.... DISBOURBON, maybe. (VH)
(PO Box 260276, Madison, WI 53726, discider@tripod.com)

DISORDER - "We're Still Here" CD

They certainly are...here we have those classic Brit punkers DISORDER, still plugging away—and while they have slowed down the pace a bit—it's still quite the distorted mess that they are known for. A bit more sing-songy than their classic *Distortion Till Deafness* or *Mental Disorder* EPs, but still packing a decent punch. But seriously what is up with the last track—I mean really what is up with Euro-punx and being into techno? Fuck that. (MT)
(HG Fact, 105 Nakano Shinbashi M, 2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho, Nakano, Tokyo 164-0013, JAPAN, hgfact@japan.interq.or.jp)

THE DREAM IS DEAD - "Letter of Resignation" CD

THE DREAM IS DEAD is from Indiana and contains one member from BURN IT DOWN. They crank through five songs of powerful mid-tempo hardcore that are full of surging rhythms, hammering drums and ferocious vocals. The way the songs are structured actually reminds me a lot of BURN IT DOWN. They even do a respectable POISON IDEA cover for the last song on this CD. There was some cool cover art that was done by the "Obey Giant" guy Shepard Fairey. Unfortunately, the label stamped a big "For Promotional Use Only" right in the middle of it, pretty much ruining the effect. Regardless this is pretty solid for their debut release. (RC)
(What Else, PO Box 1211, Columbus, IN 47202, www.whatelserecords.com)

DREXEL - "The Inevitable is Available" CD

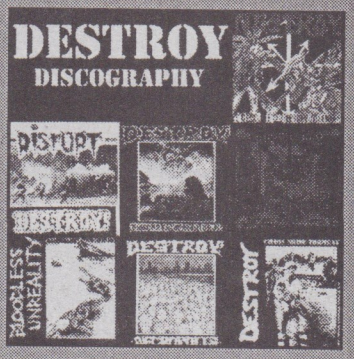
What a cruel, cruel prank. The first song on this CD totally rocks, like a crazy combination of the THUMBS and really good mid-tempo melodic hardcore that plays like one massive mosh part, all under brutal melodic vocals. Then the rest of the CD starts, and it just sounds like fucking MTV bullshit. What a waste of fantastic, crushing production. I mean, I guess it's a cut above the rest, and they're willing to get weird sometimes, but I'm so utterly disappointed. If you see this in the bargain bin, the first song makes it worth picking up. Other than that, don't pay more than a dollar. (MX)
(Fork in Hand, PO Box 23123, Boston, MA 02123, www.forkinhand.com)

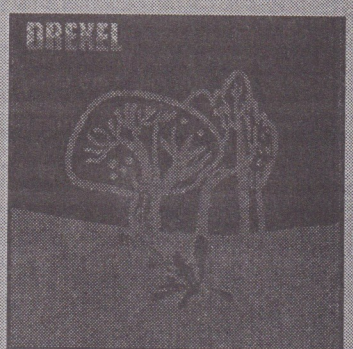
D'ROTZBOUWEN/F.I.O.M - EP

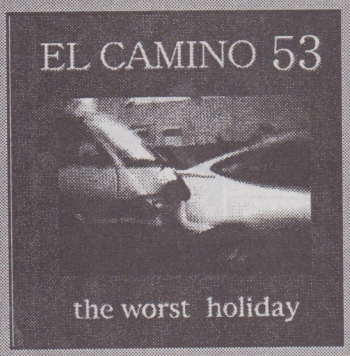
D'ROTZBOUWEN from France (I think) give us three abrasive hardcore numbers—sounding almost exactly like UNHINGED in places with the super raw female vocals traded with a fella who gargles razor blades, great stuff. F.I.O.M from Japan turn up the heat a little with three tracks of Japanese staccato thrash complete with metal solos, the muddy recording loses some of the punch but I get the message. (TB)
(Anomie, Feldsieper Str. 13, 44809, Bochum, GERMANY)

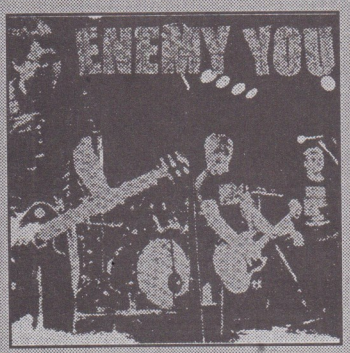
DS-13 - "No One Will Thank You When You Are Dead" CD

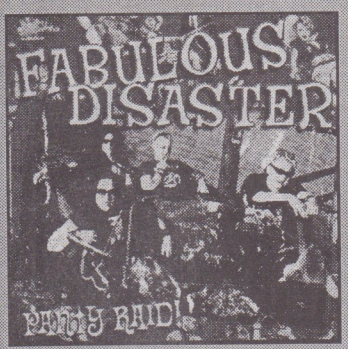
This is a discography of sorts, covering a variety of EPs and compilation tracks from DS-13's first few years of existence. You already know the story on these guys. They turned the scene on its ear a few years ago with their relentless attack of thrashing punk songs. With the combination of musical talent, eye-watering speed, and songs mostly under a minute long, you really couldn't go wrong in picking up any of their records. It looks like there are a couple of unreleased songs on here, plus a quality live set recorded at Burnt Ramen, a club located here in the Bay Area. If you missed out on these releases the first time around, then do yourself a favor and pick this fucker up. (RC)
(Deranged, www.derangedrecords.com)

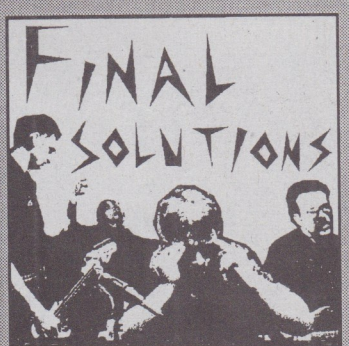












DURGA - "Earn Your Red Wings, Mormon" EP

DURGA plays keyboard-heavy—sorry, but I have to use the term—screamo. It's just what it is. I can't just let a perfectly good word sit when it is needed for description. That said, the lyrics are anything but your typical "emotional" lyrics. Instead they have the same feel as bands like the BLOOD BROTHERS or the RED LIGHT STING, with the sexual imagery and goofy song titles all thrown together in a way that screams, "I'm an art student! This is my band!" It's all very modern. Who would have guessed the band is from San Diego? The accompanying letter says that "those who can appreciate the sounds of ORCHID, LOCUST, MILEMARKER" will dig the record. As a fan of several of the mentioned bands, I feel boxed in by this assumption, because while bands like MILEMARKER and ORCHID, and even the LOCUST, present/ed me with something exciting and/or good musically, this record just kind of drags on and seems done, only years after this kind of stuff started appearing. (WR)
(Transgalactic Ladder, PO Box 104, Wilmington, CA 90748)

THE EIGHT BUCKS EXPERIMENT - "Volume Junky" CD

Super macho rock. These guys have listened to one too many NASHVILLE PUSSY records. Some of the stupidest lyrics I've seen this month. Like this one from the song "Full Throttle": "It's hard being young punk and gifted, I just want to throw down and get lifted." These guys don't sound young, punk, or gifted, just old and tired. (CK)
(Blue Moon, 2075 S University Blvd., #264, Denver, CO 80210)

EL CAMINO 53 - "The Worst Holiday" EP

Ten tracks of relentless Japanese hardcore that sounds much like how being smashed in the face over and over with a steel chair feels. That's a good thing. Their hammering drum and guitar attack never lets up nor gives you a second to breathe—which helps them to maintain their hectic and infectious energy. Fear not though, this is not simply another tuneless thrash band—cause these cats got hooks! (MT)
(Too Circle, 3-29-18, Toyotama-minami, Nerima-ku, Tokyo #176-0014, JAPAN, toocir@xd5.so-net.ne.jp)

EMSCHERKURVE 77 - "Lern Ma Deutsch! Lektion 1" CD

EMSCHERKURVE 77 do covers, in German, of bands such as the US BOMBS, MURPHY'S LAW, AGNOSTIC FRONT, COCKNEY REJECTS, IRON CROSS, ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE, DROPKICK MURPHYS, BUSINESS, KILL YOUR IDOLS, ANTISEEN, and others. It sounds like they get some help from the actual bands themselves! This is definitely worth my time. (SR)
(Knock-Out, www.knock-out.de)

ENEMY YOU - "The Promise Breakers" EP

Ball-less BAD RELIGION poppy punk. This EP is by no means bad, they have this shit down pat and if you like this kinda schlock this band are as good as any... But man, where's the anger? Where's the energy? Where are the punks? (TB)
(Fat Wreck Chords, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.fatwreck.com)

EVIL THINGIES - "New Shapes in Sound" 10"

From Holland. The EVIL THINGIES are solidly in the genre of spooky-ooky organ-driven rock 'n' shake played for audiences of madly-frugging hipsters in sunglasses. Nothing "evil" about it in the slightest, though: *New Shapes in Sound* is catchy listening but doesn't boast much in the way of edge, danger and/or bad boy/girl appeal. A little too clean-shaven and well-scrubbed, maybe. Mannered. To damn the EVIL THINGIES with faint praise I'll call 'em *good at what they do* and drop it at that. (JH)
(Tear It Up, PO Box 7616, 5601 JP Eindhoven, THE NETHERLANDS, info@tear-it-up-records.nl)

THE EXPLODING HEARTS - "Guitar Romantic" LP

It's only fair to warn you that I am a self-confessed fan of Screaming Apple Records. Really, it's gotten to the point that if I see a record of theirs in a record shop that I haven't heard of, I will generally purchase it anyway. (The deciding factor is usually whether or not the pic sleeve grabs me.) This is late 70s/early 80s power pop. Well, really it isn't, but it sounds as if it could be. Honestly, some of the tracks sound like they're straight off one of those *Power Pearls* compilations. If you like bands like PROTEX, TOURS, the DONKEYS or RUDI, you should enjoy this. Good stuff. Pop music. (KK)
(Screaming Apple, Dustemichstr. 14, 50939, Köln, GERMANY)

FABULOUS DISASTER - "Panty Raid" CD

All-female band, musically sounding like NOFX (on a label distributed by Fat Records). A NOFX without the silly lyrics and the nasally vocals. A NOFX with nice (almost pretty... think INDIGO GIRLS) vocal harmonies, and Joan Jett as the lead singer. Overall, this record's sound is tight, clean, well-produced, and a near-perfect example of this punk rock genre. I'd say these ladies have got what they do down to a science. (AS)
(Pink and Black, PO Box 190516, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.pinkandblack.com)

THE FAD - CD

I'll be a monkey's uncle: the FAD aren't bad in the least. Six tracks of punchy sort-of power-pop mod rock 'n' roll from this East Coast three-piece. The singer's got a sort of clear, earnest quality in his voice that I admire, and the band are clean, lively, and very economical in their approach. Vocal harmonies are pitch-perfect. Considering that this kinda music can go bad in a million ways, it's to their credit that the FAD play it right. Another one of those left-field surprises. Nice.(JH)
(LoFi, 250 Washington Ave., Ste. 1C, Brooklyn, NY 11205, www.infoentertainment.com)

FINAL SOLUTIONS - "Eat Shit" EP

The four tunes here, recorded in primitive monaural (and sounding like they were mastered on cardboard), do justice to their punk and protopunk roots. Their cover of the URINALS' "Hologram" is a haunting rockout with overmodulated vocals and drums that almost keep up with the beat; a great trashfest. "Victim of Your Cunt" has more of a classic HEARTBREAKERS feel, and "You Make Me Laugh" continues the noise assault through to its eternal groove. Strongly recommended. (SS)
(Therapeutic, PO Box 13643, New Orleans, LA 70185)

FLACHENBRAND - LP

Never slower than breakneck, aside from the odd intro, these 15 songs range from really fast to blistering grind. INFEST-style vocals and fucking *huge* production, this wall of guitars delivers the goods. Completely solid from start to finish, even the times I find myself chuckling at the vocals, the shit still smokes. The song titles lead me to believe that these kids like to have a good time, although I really wish I could read the lyrics to "Whigger Cunt." (WN)
(R.S.R., S. Gessner, Str. D. Friedens 45, 07819 Mittelpollnitz, GERMANY)

FLYING ENTERPRISE - "Dio Film" EP

Melodic hardcore with a hint of the JAM and some occasional dissonance. Very emotional sounding (English) vocals. Extremely pretty gatefold sleeve and thick, milky-white vinyl. The production has the guitar a little on the quiet side unfortunately. Still, definitely a good release, the best thing I've heard from the Czech Republic for a while (cos you know I've got my finger on the pulse of that scene, right?) Note how I am avoiding saying "Czech it out!" or other cheap jokes like that. I like this. (AM)
(Ultima Ratio, Kokavec Miroslav, Spácilova 11, 618 00 Brno, CZECH REPUBLIC, ultima.ratio@seznam.cz)

FORCE FED GLASS - "Fine Tuned Chaos Motherfuckers" CD

I think that "Fine Tuned Chaos" is the perfect name for this release, because that is exactly what it sounds like. FORCE FED GLASS hit me with a non-stop mess of twisted metal carnage on this discography CD. Crazy time changes, blast beats, swirling riffs, crushing breakdowns, brutal vocals....it is harsh and kind of messy and I liked it a lot, especially the first six songs. Fans of bands like CONVERGE should take note. (RC)
(Electric Human Project, 500 South Union St., Wilmington, DE 19805, www.electrichumanproject.com)

FREAKS UNION - "The Beginning of the End" CD

Stepping dangerously close to the too crisp and clean these folks have just enough speed and hooks to keep me interested. I'm getting a strong ANTI FLAG meets STRIKE ANYWHERE feeling (mostly because of the anthemic tuneage and sociopolitical bent of the lyrics) with a splash more hardcore. I must confess I'm more enamored by a band who couple accessible punk with smart lyrics, than a bunch of twerps singing about broken hearts. These folks rail against the war, hate and negativity and y'know, even though I'm a miserable jaded old fucker I can get behind that.... (TB)
(Town Clock, 39 Station Rod, Thirsk, YO7 1QH, ENGLAND)

FOUR MONSTROUS NUCLEAR STOCKPILES - "Give Peace a Chance" CD

Ten blasts of raw D-beat punk from these French fellows—solid drum attack and loud as fuck guitars give this the edge that it needs to stand out from countless Dis-clones. Plus, with song titles like "Radical Fist Fuck Session" and "Q: And Grannies? A: And Grannies!!" how can you go wrong? (MT)
(Panx, 8p 50 58, 31033 Toulouse, Cedex 5, FRANCE, infos@panx.net)

FULL OF HATRED/SCUM OF SOCIETY - split EP

Italian Dis-core courtesy of FULL OF HATRED. Thick guitars, a driving beat, some good changes, burly vocals, what more could you need? On the flipside, SCUM OF SOCIETY provide a wall of sound crust attack that is a lot more raw sounding than the FOH side. The singer sounds like the fellow from DEVOID OF FAITH bellowing over some "ultra-core violence." Pretty damn good. I will be keeping an ear open for more from these Italio-crusters. (WM)
(Disastro Sonoro, C.P. 162 - 54033, Carrara (MS), ITALY)

GEIN & THE GRAVEROBBERS - "Songs In the Key of Evil" CD

Any noodnick who was paying attention to the proliferation of surf bands in the early 90s can tell you that an instro band needs a stupid gimmick to distinguish itself from the pack (not a bad idea for bands of any sort, since it keeps gravity at arm's length). GEIN and co. go the horror route with their surprisingly fresh take on the trad surf sound, and more power to them for going as whole hog (blood-stained zombie look, titles such as "Wolfsbane," atmospheric sound bites, brooding minor keys aplenty even in the fast numbers, a surf arrangement of an IRON MAIDEN tune [I'm taking their word for it—all I know from Eddie's boys is "Run For the Hills"]) as MAN OR ASTROMAN? did the science fiction instro. Credo! (DD)
(www.geinandthegraverobbers.com)

GERMS - "Lexicon Devil" EP

"Circle One" and "No God" are on the B-side. Perhaps you can find this bootleg, but for how much? Of course I love this to death. Darby Crash, Lorna Doom, Pat Smear: Los Angeles. Blood, glam, teenagers. Fuck you...it's the GERMS! Just buy the CD or something—you should really have all the songs. (AC)
(no address)

GIANT HAYSTACKS - "How We Lost the War" EP

GIANT HAYSTACKS, especially with "How We Lost the War," has the choppy, tense punctuation of political UK "art" bands from GANG OF FOUR to RED MONKEY. The songs on the B side are held together less tightly, but are still imaginative and urgent. There's also a DC influence here—LUNGFISH comes to mind. A stand out debut EP. (AC)
(Giant Haystacks, PO Box 22971, Oakland, CA 94609)

GLENN'S ARMY - "Major Threat" CD

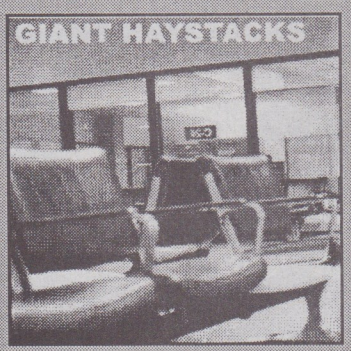
Guys, your folks are going to be pissed when they find out those checks they send you while you're away at college went to recording this piece of shit. No excuses, kids, write Mom and Dad and apologize to them. I mean it. What the fuck were you thinking? They even sing about mooching off Mom and Dad. Early QUEERS/CLETUS worship that goes nowhere but into the trashcan. Any CD/record/whatever that opens with the line "I can smoke pot until my brain rots" will never get my approval. Kids, grow some pubes, get a job, and stop writing horrible songs. Now go finish your letters to your folks while I do the world a favor and destroy this CD. (BM)
(8 Roger Williams Ct, Portsmouth, RI 02871, glennsarmy@aol.com)

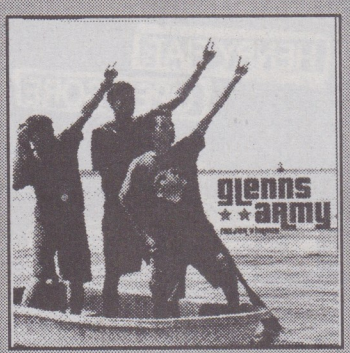
GMORK/I SHOT CYRUS - split EP

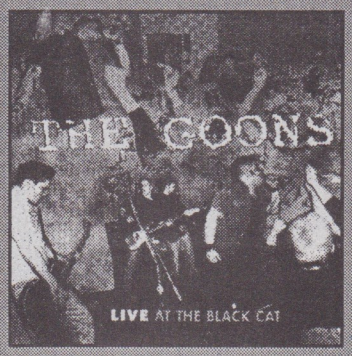
GMORK, hailing from Germany, have a blown-out speaker, recorded-too-high production quality about them that fits their brand of lacerated vocal-cord grind well. The noisy intensity and tempo changes are good enough to make me overlook the fact that the drummer occasionally has trouble holding a blast. Decent stuff. I SHOT CYRUS (any self-respecting movie fan should catch the reference), from São Paulo, deliver half a dozen songs of more straightforward go-for-the-kill speedy hardcore/thrash. Very pissed and very effective. Both bands are pretty damn killer. (EL)
(Na Und, F.Surmann, Scheffelstr. 27, D-44147 Dortmund/Brd, GERMANY, earslaughter@gmx.de)

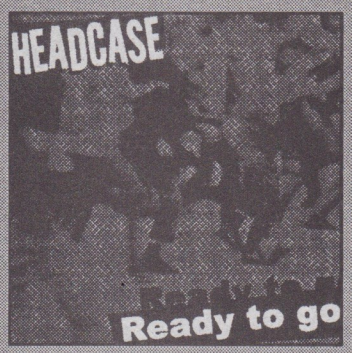
GOLD CIRCLES - "Goldcircle Dance Song" EP

There's a war coming, but the kids just want to get their groove on. This is the soundtrack to a thousand hipster ex-punk dance parties. Oh, what about the music, you ask? It's disco with really great-sounding guitars. What's wrong with dancing at the end of the world? Nothing, I am just a fucking curmudgeon who never could dance anyway. Ignore me. By the way, this is a picture disc. (AM)
(Copter Crash, PO Box 6095, Hudson, FL 34667-3095, www.coptercrash.com)









GOONS - "Live at the Black Cat" CD

I hate live CDs...always have, unless its SLF's *Hanx* (which this isn't). the GOONS are pretty good though, having that almost garage meets punk sound, not unlike the WEAKLINGS or even CANDY SNATCHERS.This CD also has some snazzy video footage and photos which is a bonus. The live recording is fine and the band play their tunes well... I just don't like live CDs. The singer looks like Floyd which is a little unsettling too. (TB)
(PO Box, 5648, Arlington, VA 22205)

GUNS, LIQUOR & WHORES - "Serpico" 10"

First, that's a terrible name. I cringe every time I look at the cover. Ow. Second, damn! This is some raging, vicious, motherfucking hardcore that makes up for their lack of a good name. Fast, wild, distortion, crazy, nuts—all words that come to my head as I sit here smashing my ears with their violence. I bet you a dollar to that donut that these fellows make for an intense live show. The vocalist alternates between over-the-top to crazy in his delivery. The raw as fuck recording only adds to the excitement on these vinyl grooves. They even toss in covers of both INFEST and TURBONEGRO, just to fuck you up. Rip-roaring. (WM)
(Putrid Filth Conspiracy, PO Box 7092, S-200 42 Mälmo, SWEDEN, putridfilth@bigfoot.com)

HABLAN POR LA ESPALDA - "Le Petit Detail..." CD

Really dark, chaotic emo-influenced hardcore from Uruguay that sometimes strays onto the more melodic, HOT WATER MUSIC side of things; sometimes the intricate, guitar-noodling side of things. Three cheers for lyrics, printed in English and Spanish, that don't sound whiny, and for original song structures that kick the shit out of the listener. I approve wholeheartedly. (MX)
(Sniffing, cc3288 (1000), Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA, rulemule@hotmail.com)

HANGING ROTTEN - "Your Cheatin' Heart" LP

HANGING ROTTEN mix together two different styles on this release On some songs they tear through some blazing grindcore. Lots of speed and a touch of metal come together nicely on those tracks. On the other songs they drag through slow metallic sludge. Their slow songs seemed to go on forever, and I found them rather boring. The fast stuff was key and I would like to hear more of that. (RC)
(Putrid Filth Conspiracy, Box 7092, South, 200 42 Mälmo, SWEDEN, www.flyto/putridfilth)

HAVEKS - "It's Not Our Fault" CD

OK, honesty time here. Everyone who does CD reviews here just accepts that you will get one, *one*, good CD a month maximum, and that's grading on a curve. Since anyone with a day job can put out a CD now, the quality is just nowheresville baby. Here's my monthly "B- on a curve" CD. Four-song CDEP of crunchy, by-the-numbers rock-a-roll that fails to annoy, bore, or irritate me. Bar band punk, but damn good bar band punk. (RW)
(Vek)

HEAD HITS CONCRETE/MY MINDS MINE - split 10"

Crazy noisy shit from Canada's HEAD HITS CONCRETE meets the furious grind of Holland's MY MINDS MINE. I thought MY MINDS MINE was incredible on this—relentlessly pummeling energy, blasting drums, and shrieking vocals, reminding me of German stuff like Y and STACK. The HEAD HITS CONCRETE stuff was a bit less impressive—too often being just a wall of noise and feedback. But then some people will view that as a good thing, and the occasional breaks are cool, so overall, a totally bruising piece of vinyl. (EL)
(Putrid Filth Conspiracy, Box 7092, S-20042 Mälmo, SWEDEN, putridfilth@bigfoot.com)

HEAD HITS CONCRETE - "Hope, Fear and the Terror of Dreams" EP

This has to be the heaviest record I've heard in a very, very long time. Hailing from Winnipeg, Canada and containing members of semi-legendary hardcore band SWALLOWING SHIT, this Canuck powerhouse will rip through you like a bullet train. Seemingly in the same vein as earlier DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN and the like, HEAD HITS CONCRETE seem to bring something a bit more genuine to the table in terms of a sound more firmly rooted in hardcore than the earlier, and lyrics that recall the same politically-minded pathos of many SWALLOWING SHIT classics. A definite must-have for fans of brutally heavy, technical hardcore/grind. Get this. (SP)
(Intolerant Messiah, PO Box 6162, San Mateo, CA 94403, www.intolerantmessiah.com)

HEADCASE - "Ready to Go" EP

These Belgian skinheads offer four melodic Oi! anthems for your perusal. Bords De Seine Records has another catchy skinhead band on their roster with HEADCASE. The men serve up three tracks exclusive to this EP, "Ready to Go," "The Real Oi!" and "Here to Stay." In addition, you get "Pass the Ammunition," which is featured on a full length HEADCASE CD called, appropriately, *Ammunition*. This is polished Oi! for people who think for themselves. Give this EP a spin as soon as you get an opportunity! (BR)
(Bords De Seine, BP 85, 75561, Paris, CX 12, FRANCE, www.bordsdeseine.fr.st)

HELLBOUND/WAVES - split CD

This split release starts out with WAVES, from Kyoto, who are fast and energetic in the Japanese tradition, with two songs of wild and crazy, poppy, fast, and totally energetic hardcore. HELLBOUND don't know when to stop. Jesus, c'mon...what? An 11-fucking-minute METALLICA intro? Setting the scene for me to fall asleep, drooling all over myself, wanting to listen to BLACK FLAG. Aside from big time overuse of the guitar solo, they're actually really good when they finally start playing! It's dirty, harsh, abrasive DISCHARGE-influenced hardcore, but not worth the wait. (VH)
(157 Kamiagu Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, JAPAN)

HELLBOUND HAYRIDE - "Live" CD

Hillbilly redneck rock recorded live in LA. Songs about cars, driving trucks and broken hearts. All the themes you'd expect. Too clichéd and lacking any creativity. There's even a cover of "Folsom Prison Blues." (CK)
(Split Seven, 12405 Venice Blvd. #265, Los Angeles, CA 90086)

HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE - "Patmos Or Bust" EP

I can't tell you how excited I was to have a new HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE record waiting for me. Imagine my surprise when this record started playing. Who decided to put these guys in a proper studio? I can actually make out lyrics and clearly hear guitar parts. Definitely, not what I am used to. I am actually shocked that they have a bit of the Swedish garage rock sound. Just a bit. Not that I'm complaining. It's just disconcerting. The songs are still great. Fast, kick-my-ass rock and roll. Four songs that simply rock. Is Henry singing with an English accent? (CK)
(Wrench, BCM Box 4049, London WC1N 3XX, ENGLAND)

HOLDING ON - "Question What You Live For" LP

OK, when I asked Mike Thorn how this compared to their previous LP, Mike said it was a lot more loud and slick and that I would probably like it. For once Mike is right about something other than the tastiness of burritos. This record is completely awesome! HOLDING ON has always been a band that existed somewhere between the more raw sounds of LIFE'S HALT and the more polished sound of KILL YOUR IDOLS, and while the production levels on this record may sound like something the latter might have done, the overall sound of this band is still somewhere in between. Lyrically, we have some powerful stuff about just dealing with everyday life while the world comes crumbling down around you, and the songs are are sung with force. Man, I would do some lawnmower dancing to this shit if I didn't think I would end up like a 300 lb. turtle on his back. Oh, not that a record would tell you this, but HOLDING ON rock live too. (JF)
(Bridge Nine, PO Box 99052, Boston, MA 02199, holdingon612@hotmail.com)

HORROR - "First Blood" 10"

I hate to bring up past members' endeavors, but it'll help put you in the ballpark with these Brits. Ex (amongst others) VOORHEES, with the singer of IMBALANCE. It's a straight ahead hardcore attack not unlike the former band but vocals like the more hardcore IMBALANCE numbers. This is what hardcore should be: fast as fuck, no frills, no metal, no bullshit—why England doesn't have more bands of this caliber I don't know, hopefully these fellas are starting a trend!! (TB)
(Chainsaw Safety, PO Box 260318, Bellerose, NY 11426)

HORROR SHOW - "Our Design" CD

You know, it seems a bit silly that I am reviewing this when I just reviewed the vinyl version of this like two months ago. The difference is, the CD version includes their demo and one unreleased track. I also read recently that the singer of this band is in jail now for stabbing somebody in a fight. That is definitely bad news for the band, because this is a pretty damn good release, intense fast-paced hardcore that steers away from any metal overtones. Clear production and strong vocals round this out into a great release. If you are into bands with a youth crew edge to their music, like REACHING FORWARD, then HORROR SHOW may just be your thing. (RC)
(Deathwish, 10 Lothrop St, Beverly, MA 01915, www.deathwishinc.com)

HOT FLASHEZ/SOUTH BAY BESSIE - split EP

This had all the markings of a horrible experience: ugly collage art, horn players listed in the credits, and a healthy dose of press kit name-dropping. Thank God I was wrong. HOT FLASHEZ have horn players, but don't play ska, just simple melodic punk with good lyrics and the occasional "funky," MINUTEMEN-esque breakdown. SOUTH BAY BESSIE hail from Flint, Michigan—which, according to the film *Roger & Me*, was once voted the worst place to live in Amerika—and they crank out some good rock with clever lyrics. Not too original, but good for a spin or two. (MX)
(Code Seven, PO Box 3482, Flint, MI 48502, www.geocities.com/southbaybessie)

THE IMMORTAL LEE COUNTY KILLERS - "Love Is A Charm Of Powerful Trouble" CD

I would really like to be a huge fan of these guys, but there is something here that drives me up the wall. I can't really pinpoint what it is. I like the bluesy slide guitar and the cardboard box sounding drumming. I think it's got to be the vocals. Something about them makes my skin crawl. I dig sincerity, but sometimes too much is simply too much. (CK)
(Estrus, PO Box 2125, Bellingham, WA 98227)

IN CONTROL - "The Truth Hurts" CD

IN CONTROL bring us their second full length with 13 tracks of modern Nardcore consisting of the "fast verse and chorus with heavy mosh breakdown" formula. Those familiar with the eclectic IN CONTROL sound (everything from squealing metal guitars to melodic sing-along anthems) will not be disappointed. The cover art that I would have sworn was drawn by Ernesto, was done instead by some dude named Paul Nagel. A definite progression from their last album. (CC)
(Indecision, PO Box 6052, Garden Grove, CA 92846)

INKOMPLEX - "Ikarus" EP

This is good melodic punk rock from Germany that reminds me somewhat of SO MUCH HATE and bands of that ilk. The lyrics are in German and there is no lyric sheet to get translated, so I don't know what they are singing about. The record is on Plastic Bomb, though, so I doubt that this is a repeat of the whole ULTIMA THULE mess here. A good, but not great 7". (JF)
(Plastic Bomb, Swen Bock, Gartnerstr. 23, 47055 Duisburg, GERMANY)

INSURANCE RISK - "No Pity" EP

From My War Records, who introduced us to the SNOBS, here's ten songs of furious, biter angst from Norway's INSURANCE RISK. Fast, vengeful, straight edge hardcore without all the bullshit. Fucking great! (VH)
(My War, 35 Kings Circle, Malvern, PA 19355, www.mywarrecords.com)

IRON LUNG/LANA DAGALES - split LP

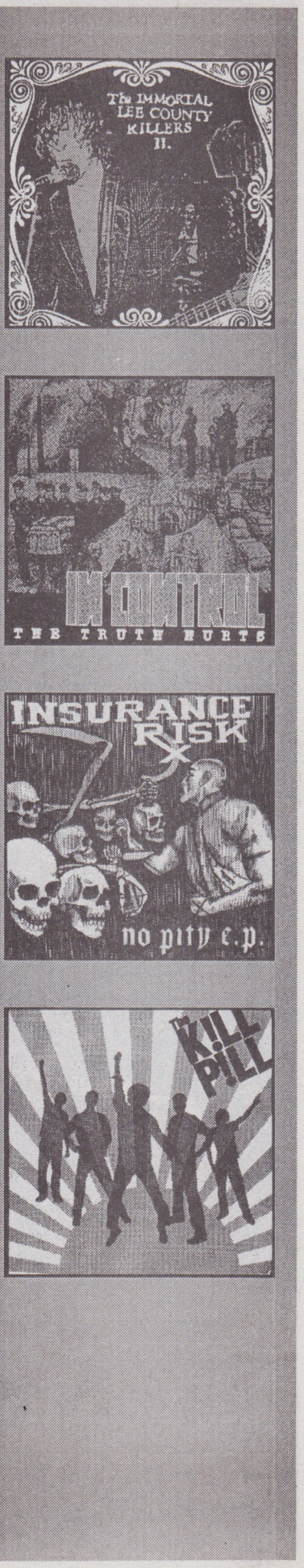
Not to succumb to hyperbole, but this record kicks ass. IRON LUNG does it again, getting even better and stranger since their *Demonstrations* 7". They've created a sound completely their own, and how many bands can you say that about these days? I usually don't dig bands using a ton of noise on their albums, cuz it usually seems like just random sound filler, but on songs like "Cervical Laser" and "Horizontal Respiration" the feedback-manipulation they use is perfectly fitting noise control amidst odd time changes. And this is by far the best LANA DAGALES stuff I've heard too. Greg's bass recording sounds positively monstrous, while their noodly start-stop attention-deficit-disordered grind will have your head reeling and your ears racing to keep up. There's even some downright prog riffs too. Top notch material from both bands. (EL)
(Boredom Noise, PO Box 11351, Oakland, CA 94611, www.boredomnoise.com)

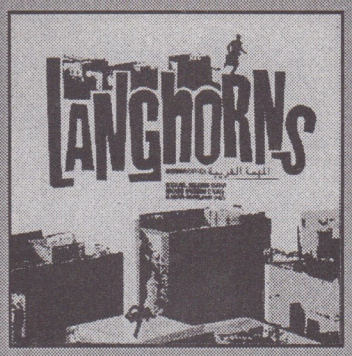
JOHN BROWN'S ARMY - "Who Fucked the Culture Up?" CD

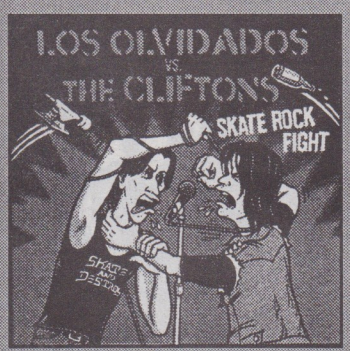
Hyper-fast guttural hardcore...23 songs here: 12 new ones plus stuff from splits and comps. I'm not really a fan of the throaty "I got marbles in my mouth" vocals. But that is easily overshadowed by the solid thrashy hardcore, awesome wall of guitar, and noisy chaos...what more could I ask for? (WN)
(Gloom, PO Box 14253, Albany, NY 12212)

THE KILL PILL - "Outside These City Walls..." CD

In the style of (INTERNATIONAL) NOISE CONSPIRACY and the last ORCHID LP, the KILL PILL seem to be trying to promote the "revolution by rock 'n' roll" cliché doctrine (sample lyric: "baby, yeah... freedom here, freedom now"). While I do agree with Emma Goldman's famous quote ("If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of







your revolution"), sometimes bands try so hard to get your ass shaking that they forget to give your brain something to do as well. All we're left with are ideas that have been better articulated hundreds of times. Unfortunately, that's what happens here. (MX)
(Uprising, PO Box 42259, Philadelphia, PA 19104, www.uprisingrecords.com)

KNUCKLEHEAD - "Hostage Radio" CD

KNUCKLEHEAD plays some above-average Canadian style punk rock. Really straightforward stuff, anthemic…catchy songs. Verse-chorus- verse-chorus. The lyrics are pretty impressive and the singer has a really good voice. I think he could do more interesting songs musically. These are real simple and get kind of boring towards the end. Overall, the band reminds me a little of a sped-up BOUNCING SOULS. Good stuff, without a doubt. (WR)
(Longshot Music, www.longshotmusic.com)

KROCH - "Surkrut on Beer" EP

This is a waste of time. Horrible noise (bongo drums, guitar, and distorted vocals seem to be the instruments of choice here) attempting some form of "grind." This is both uninteresting and a poor display of apparent boredom. Perhaps there is some humor involved here and I'm just not getting it. (SP)
(Darbouka, c/o Fredi Brahim, 17 Rue de la Foret, 67340 Menchhoffen, FRANCE)

LANGHORNS - "Mission Exotica" CD

Fun and interesting instrumental surf music. Light, breezy, and rocky like a day at the beach. (CK)
(Bad Taste, Box 1243, 221 05 Lund, SWEDEN, info@badtasterecords.se)

THE LAPIS SANCTUARY - "Fairsay Question Hearsay" EP

Quite an impressive EP here. Dark and haunting, The LAPIS SANCTUARY has a mood that immediately brings to mind other Illinois bands I've reviewed previously like KUNG FU RICK or LONG LIVE NOTHING. Its technical, brutal hardcore, but there's just something more about it that sends this certain chill down my spine. On this EP, though, the LAPIS SANCTUARY seems to draw their songs out a bit more than the aforementioned and focus a bit more on this sort of neck-breaking groove many of their songs have. Quality stuff. (SP)
(The Dupage Collective, 2 S 174 Sheffield Rd., Glen Ellyn, IL 60137, www.thedupagecollective.com)

LATIN DOGS - "Warning!" EP

Bootleg. The LATIN DOGS were a Michigan outfit that played fast, wore cop shades, and shot first (asking questions later). You might have heard 'em on *Killed by Death.* Yeah, anyway, this is what punk rock sounded like when I was first exposed to it at a tender age: rough noise with a grubby edge and lyrics about commandos with machine guns. A neglected classic, for reals. (JH)
(Kazaamo, no address)

THE LAWRENCE ARMS - "Porno and Snuff Films" EP

If you aren't yet familiar with the LAWRENCE ARMS, they are a Chicago-based three-piece with former members of the BROADWAYS and SLAPSTICK. Their music has a strong JAWBREAKER influence, and the songs on this record bear resemblance to later SCREECHING WEASEL. They are a good, solid band—not great, but really good. While I must say that I prefer their first few releases to their more recent ones, which seem a little formulaic, this EP is not bad at all. It has two newer songs (as of a year or so ago, when this was released) and one song rerecorded from their split CD with SHADY VIEW TERRACE (my favorite LAWRENCE ARMS release). This record was released as part of the Fat Wreck Chords singles club, which means the only way you're probably going to find this is for more than it is worth on eBay. If you want to hear some really solid punk rock, you might want to pick up one of their first few albums, but not this. (WR)
(Fat Wreck Chords, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.fatwreck.com)

LE SCRAWL - "Too Short to Ignore" LP

LE SCRAWL pushes the limits of punk/hardcore to demented effect, filtering it through a far more original aesthetic than what your average punk considers to be a groundbreaking band (the RAMONES, groundbreaking?) Germany's LE SCRAWL play a mix of minimalist hardcore, fused with jazz (from straight to lounge to free), adding an upbeat ska edge and a crust-core vocalist—think NAKED CITY sans the metal, with different horns, and without the NYC art-jazz pretentiousness that permeates their multi-faceted career. This LP is LE SCRAWL's discography from 1990 up to 1998 (they're still together and playing, by the way) and includes an unreleased live set—an excellent recording—and, most notably, their five-song contribution of covers to the *Rotten Fake* comp. Their twisted rendering of the EXPLOITED, DE LA SOUL, TERRORIZER, CHIC, and LALO SCHIFRIN (the *Mission Impossible* song) will amaze and boggle your mind, leaving you scratching your head as to why you can't be more original or even more adventurous. People with more open tastes, find this and be joyous, all the rest of you can go buy the newest '82 thrash revival record and think that that's amazing. (WM)
(Life Is Abuse, PO Box 20524, Oakland, CA 94620, www.lifeisabuse.com)

LIGHT THE FUSE AND RUN - "1,2,3" EP

I've heard a lot about this band and am ashamed to say that I didn't pay any attention. It's good hardcore with a light emotional side to it. The vocalist yells more than screams. The songs are fast with a wall of guitar and heavy-hit drums. Sure there are some slow, quiet parts thrown in, but the band manages to do it in a way that isn't so wimpy. (PA)
(Golden Brown, 1011 South 48th St, Philadelphia, PA 19143, http://members.aol.com/lightfuserun)

LOOKS LIKE RAIN/THE INFAMOUS - split EP

Here you get two hardcore bands who hail from the Washington DC area. LOOKS LIKE RAIN play straightforward hardcore with an East Coast flair and a slightly harsh edge to it. The INFAMOUS speed things up and go for more of a modern youth crew style. Not bad. (RC)
($4 ppd: Grave Mistake, 1635 Generals Hwy, Annapolis, MD 21401, thatreasonisyou@hotmail.com)

LOS OLVIDADOS/CLIFTONS - split EP

The LOS OLVIDADOS reunion show and reissue stuff on AT was nice, but this is another band that would have been best not to try and record anything new. This is just second-rate stuff that is being done a lot better by many bands today. Just because you were around in the beginning doesn't meah you can rest on your laurels. The CLIFTONS, on the other hand, play some fast snotty skate punk that makes me smile. (JF)
(Super Speedway, 304 S.3rd St, San Jose, CA 95112)

MHZ - "Action Figure" EP

....very strange production here....NO FUCKING WONDER, Mr. JIM DIAMOND produced it!!!!! Loud, heavy....fuzzy....distorted...! I'll tell ya boy, JIM IS THE MAN these days, ain't he??? Most of the time I can give a rats-ass about some of the bands he's producing, but fuck, he gives everything his signature sound!!!! Jim gets my pink

totem Producer of the Year award for sure!!! He's even a bad-ass bass player...one of my favorites at the moment!!!! Vote yes on Jim!!! (SW)
(Flying Bomb, PO Box 971038, Ypsilanti, MI 48197)

MACHETAZO - "Carne de Cementerio" LP

Vinyl version of this death/grind band's full-length debut originally released on Razorback Records, with one new track—a wicked grind version of BLACK SABBATH's "Children of the Grave." This is in a nice gatefold sleeve with new cover art, and I gotta say, this is the best fucking cover art I've seen in months. There is no way you'll see it and not go, "That kicks fucking ass." Anyway, this Spanish duo play old-school death/gore-grind in the vein of IMPETIGO, HEMORRHAGE, and of course CARCASS, with plenty of horror movie samples and slower, catchy metal riffs mixed in with the grind parts. They also do covers of S.O.B. and ABSCESS. I got this record when it originally came out three years ago and it still puts a smile on my face every time I play it—so you'll be digging this record for a while. (EL)
(Throne, PO Box 8035, 33200 Gijon, SPAIN, www.thronerecords.com)

MANDOWN - "Quicker Than Poison" EP

I had no idea Capsule Records was still around. I haven't heard of this record label in years. Anyway, on to the record, MANDOWN brings us seven songs of mid-paced, early 80s influenced hardcore with gruff vocals. The weak mixing job on the recording doesn't help the stripped-down guitar style that this band is trying to achieve. This could be a lot better had they brought up the guitars. Instead, the vocals end up seeming way too loud. Get this band into a studio with a decent engineer, and I think you'll have a much more impressive outcome. Not bad, but it could be better. (CC)
(Capsule, PO Box 1861, Belleville, MI 48112)

MIDGETMEN - "Pool Party Emergency" CD

A punky release with a good mix of art influence such as MISSION OF BURMA and PAVEMENT. Some out-of-key vocals and some primal playing make this is a nice change of pace. These guys do crank them out when they wanna. Do I hear a little NEW YORK DOLLS? A strange mix that somehow works. (RL)
(www.themidgetmen.com)

MIGRA VIOLENTA - "HC Crust" LP

Just as the title suggests, MIGRA VIOLENTA delivers 21 songs of crusty hardcore on this LP, along with healthy doses of youthful energetic hardcore not unlike LIFES HALT and TEAR IT UP. This has been out as a CD for a couple of years, and I'm glad it's made it to vinyl—this shit is ripping from start to finish. Higher pitched screams instead of guttural growls make for better listening (think CRUDOS), and the songs are well-written throughout. Hailing from politically tormented Argentina, the frustration and anger at the current situation comes through loud and clear, and is certainly more relevant than a bunch of kids from SuburbanTown USA yelling about how war sucks. An awesome record made by some fucking cool folks from down south—highly recommended. (WN)
(Les Nains Aussi c/o Nicolas Retiere, 1 rue Edgar Quinet, f-38000 Grenoble, FRANCE, migraviolenta@hotmail.com)

MOLOTOV COCKTAIL/DISTRAUGHT - split EP

This was recorded live at CBGB's. The MOLOTOV COCKTAIL side is simple sing along, fuzzy guitar punk. Punk rock with enough of a pop tip to give you that elevated want to dance feeling. The DISTRAUGHT side is classic dirty, noisy, heavy D-beat hardcore. It sounds like the singer from SUICIDAL SUPERMARKET TROLLEYS is in this band. I like the DISTRAUGHT side of this the most, and it is a good live recording with most of the instruments coming through clearly. (JA)
(no address)

MARA 'AKATE - LP

I didn't know what to expect from this record as I've heard the name banged around all over the place, but have never actually placed the music with the reputation. That said, I thoroughly enjoyed this record. It's choppy, technical hardcore much in the same vein as bands like TEN GRAND and BRIGHT CALM BLUE, but with a pinch more in the way of oddities and quirks. Often there is this SKULL CONTROL/MONORCHID distorted snottiness going on with the vocals which definitely spices things up a bit, but the centerpiece to the songs themselves is surely the driving, dueling guitars as they make war with the rhythm section on each and every track. A definite pick for those on the more "arty" side of things. (SP)
(Alone, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13126, www.alonerecords.com)

MASONICS - "Live in London" CD

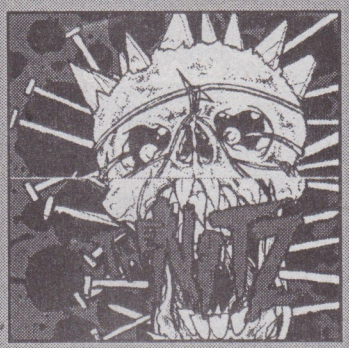
Recorded live at the Dirty Water night in North London, this is Liam "Toerag" Watson's band, you can tell just by listening. The bastard son of the Medway sound and the man responsible for many a lo-fi Billy Childish related recording, his own band are a little smoother than I expected. You still have the telltale old school Vox amp twang and the live sound gives the band a rough edge but there is definitely more of a soulful vibe than some of their Medway mates. Fans of Mr. Childish, POP RIVETS, THEE MIGHTY CEASARS et al, take note. (TB)
(Smartguy, 3288 21st St, PMB #32, San Francisco, CA 94110)

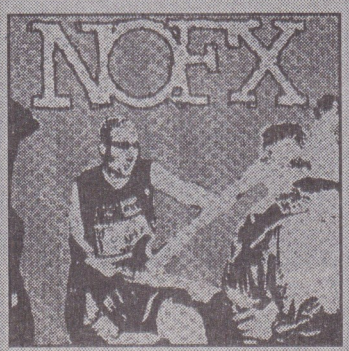
MEDIA WHORES - "Master of Pop Hits" CD

A collection from this Ohio band. I have some of this band's singles and I always sensed a power pop thing going on. Although I still get that feeling here, I also get an early SOUL ASYLYM (who were good pre-MTV videos) and later HÜSKER DÜ feel. There is even a live REPLACEMENTS cover here. A good pure pop release. Also tacked on hidden track-wise are some wacky Groucho Marx-type jokes (I'm guessing from old records although my knowledge of 50s and 60s comedy records is non-existent) and a couple songs from a live pirate broadcast. (RL)
(Screaming Apple)

MISFITS - "Cough Cool/She"

Ah, God. The first MISFITS single, a self-released oddity that bears little resemblance to the band known for the *Walk Among Us* LP, Jerry Only's glue-on Devil-Lock, and their line of GI Joe-sized action figures. *Cough Cool/She* is a document of the band way, way back when they consisted on of Glenn Danzig on electric piano, Jerry (Only) Caifa on bass, and a hairy-chested jazz drummer known only as "Manny". I dropped too much dough on an earlier bootleg of this single many a year ago—I loved to play it for MISFITS fans and watch their faces drop. Rather than menacing and musclebound, MISFITS 1.0 were quirky and dorky, a group more suited the Lodi Junior High talent show than the punk rock stage of CBGBs. The voice is already in place, though, and it's a neat hint at things to come. Only for fanatics, since both tracks are now readily availble on official releases. Clay-colored vinyl. (JH)
(no address)





MORTICIA'S LOVERS - "Rock 'n' Roll Overdose" LP

They call this here music "sexual porn rock 'n' roll." And I ask "Hey man, what's wrong with being sexy?" Nothing dammit! This is pretty fun stuff—definite dance party music. A very similar kind of enjoyment that one would experience while listening to LOLI & THE CHONES or maybe THE BANANAS. I hope you know what I'm talking about. Italian poppy garage punk sing alongs alternating snotty male/female vocals Plus a BUZZCOCKS cover! What else do you need? (AS)
(Zaxon Virille Action, www.zaxonvirileaction.com)

MR. CALIFORNIA & THE STATE POLICE/VILENTLY ILL - split EP

I have always said that there need to be more one-man bands. Here you have two of the most interesting ones around. The wonderful MR. CALIFORNIA & THE STATE POLICE delivers nine songs on a single side. This is the most amazing trashed-out punk rock delivered at rapid fire, full throttle, blink-and-you-missed-it speed. Naturally, your new favorite song will be "I Want to Fuck a Midget," as pictured on the front cover. Mine is "Sexual Robot." It's kind of gross, but it's catchy. VILENTLY ILL is Mr. California's older brother. He's been around the block, so his songs are longer. Only five on his side. But he rocks with the same passion and breakneck speed you'd expect. I can't decide which song is my favorite. It'd either be "Heroin is Stupid" or "Playin' With Matches." This is fantastic. (CK)
($4 ppd: Proud To Be Idiot, PO Box 410325, San Francisco, CA 94141-0325)

MUNICIPAL WASTE - "Waste 'Em All" LP

Damn, these guys played here recently for the Super Sabado Gigante fest and proceeded to dominate everyone in attendance with their slaying stage presence. Between heckling the audience and doing a BODY COUNT cover, they cranked through song after song of blazing thrash/metal/crossover. These guys aren't afraid to hide their influence from tons of bands. Hints of everyone from CORROSION OF CONFORMITY to CRYPTIC SLAUGHTER to IRON MAIDEN slip into these songs. Cut the shit (but don't cut the hair) and start the pit motherfucker! (RC)
(Six Weeks, 225 Lincoln Ave, Cotati, CA 94931)

NAPALM SUCK/N.O.Y.F.B. - split EP

I don't think I'll ever be able to understand what people see in the noise-blur-grind genre. I'm sure you're all nice people, as I know a couple people personally involved in this record are, but your music makes me want to drive penny nails into my ears to make it stop. This is, I'm sure, a ringing endorsement for you weirdos who like this, so get it while the getting's good. (EL)
(Constant Pain, 1300 N. Douty, Hanford, CA 93230)

THE NEDERBIETELS - "Kejje Nagaan/Comin' Home"

Bouncy and quite creditable (outside of the "Dutch" accents on the A-side, but I'm no linguist and I could very easily be wrong on that count) Eurobeat that would not sound out of place on a Nederbeat comp. (DD)
(Tear It Up, PO Box 7616, 5601 JP Eindhoven, NETHERLANDS, Info@tear-it-up-records.nl)

NEGATIVE APPROACH - "Tied Down" LP

Yes! This is an official reissue of an LP that many punks consider to be one of the defining moments in American Hardcore Punk Music. If you talk to hardcore fans, you will find almost universal agreement about the massive power this Michigan quartet delivered back in 1983. Tracks like "Tied Down," "Nothing," and "I'll Survive" are in the pantheon of the "Best Hardcore Songs Ever Recorded: Anywhere, Anytime!" Punks, if you don't own this, get "Tied Down" right now! Your life will be more complete! (BR)
(Touch & Go, PO Box 25520, Chicago, IL 60625)

NIKAD/CHILDREN OF FALL - split CD

I reviewed a CHILDREN OF FALL LP a few months ago and may have come down too hard on them. They're way fucking emo, that's for sure, but these two songs are much more gritty, chaotic, and intense than I remembered, and are really good. They keep things heavy and energetic while maintaining that mid 90s emo feel. They do what they do really well, but I still stand behind my comments about the hearts and the interludes... That's not emo, it's just bullshit. NIKAD is Croatia's answer to YAPHET KOTTO, executing the style with ease. (VH)
(Black Star, Suite 757, 211 65 Mälmo, SWEDEN, www.blackstarfoundation.com)

NINE SHOCKS TERROR - "Zen and the Art of Beating Your Ass" CD

This is a collection of NINE SHOCKS TERROR from 1996-1999, including their *Zen* LP, *Mobile Terror Unit* EP, splits, and comp tracks. Plenty of balls-out, full-tilt hardcore. 25 different tracks. 30 tracks total! I love these kinds of collections. (HM)
(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.havocrex.com)

NIPPLE ERECTORS - "The Lost EP" 45

This early UK-punk outfit made its early splash with its 1978 *King of the Bop* EP; the two tracks on this single were recorded in the same recording session. The band tears into their mid-speed rockers with accents as thick as tar, a jangly guitar backdrop, and catchy hooks that work best on "So Pissed Off"—a repetitive tune more lively than any of their "official" releases. Recommended. (SS)
(no address)

THE NITZ - "Channard" EP

Yes! Eight hardcore tunes with a fast crisp sound, raging guitars, and stand-out male vocals. Catchy. A fucking excellent release. (SR)
(Reptilian, 403 S. Broadway, Balt, MD 21231, www.reptilianrecords.com)

NOFX - "Zyclon B Bath House/Spaghetti Motel"

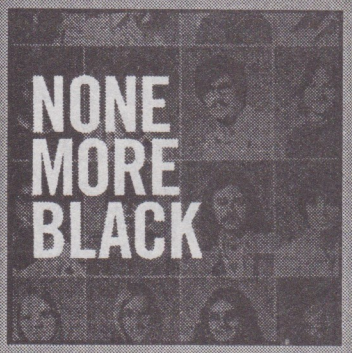
Here's something most people don't hear me say too often—I like NOFX. I'm not proud, but they are fucking great at what they do. Here we have their contribution to the Fat Wreck singles club. On side A we have NOFX sounding more like PROPAGANDHI than their normal "wacky" persona, with their track addressing corporate fascism. Wait, did I just hear the man that declared that "...if a big animal had a chance, it wouldn't take another glance, it will eat you up..." on their *Liberal Animation* LP utter "Ronald Mcdonald—paint a happy face on a McMurderer..." Wow. This record is great—good luck tracking it down though—as with all the Fat Club singles, it is long gone. (MT)
(Fat Wreck Chords, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.fatwreck.com)

NO DOCTORS - LP

Time warp to 1994 (or so), when legions of too-smart-for-their-day-jobs musicos put out weird, fucked-up modernistic odes to 70s psych/metal, squeezed through the cheese cloth woven by the MELVINS, HARRY PUSSY, and the b-team Amrep bands. NO DOCTORS have been around for long enough to have breathed the same atmosphere, and have volunteered to fly the soiled linen for a seemingly shattered movement. The back cover has them posing in true VILLAGE PEOPLE prismatic spray, pick 'em! A deliberately retarded record. (RW)
(Freedom From Records, http://freedom-from.com)

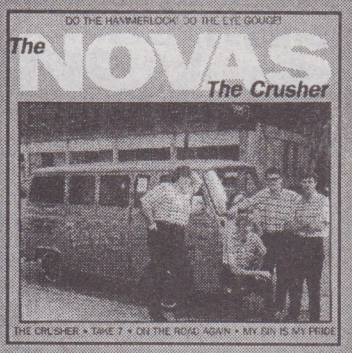
NONE MORE BLACK - "What's Inside Bone" EP

As you may or may not know, this is the new band from Jason Shevchuk, former singer of the Philadelphia powerhouse KID DYNAMITE (who, I should add, are doing two reunion shows in April in their hometown. Send me money so I can buy a plane ticket and fucking go). When they broke up, it made sense that they would split into two bands: PAINT IT BLACK lies more on the hardcore fury side of things, while NONE MORE BLACK takes whatever melodic tendencies KID DYNAMITE had and expands on them. It ends up sounding like slower KID DYNAMITE songs (think "S.O.S" off of *Shorter, Faster, Louder*) filtered through some JAWBREAKER and more straightforward rock. The lyrics are still venomous, and Jason's voice still sounds pretty raw, but overall it's missing some much-needed intensity. I am anxious to see what they do on their full length, due out on Fat later this year. (MX)
(Sub-division, 912 N. 4th St, Philadelphia, PA 19123)



THE NOVAS - "The Crusher" EP

What can be said about a rock and roll classic like "The Crusher" (especially that isn't mentioned in the entertaining and informative as always Norton liner notes)? I've already got it on 45 as well as on four or so comps, but the cover photo of the band (geek coolness personified) alone makes this an essential purchase. Also includes the instro B-side and two very spiffy previously unissued folk punk tracks. (DD)
(Norton, Box 646 Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276)



ON A SOLID ROCK - "Where Kids Don't Play" EP

ON A SOLID ROCK, from Finland, play a mix of pop, emo, and hardcore. At points I found it quite listenable, but there are these melodic emo parts with horribly sung vocals that immediately drive me away from this release. I mean, that guy's voice literally had me wanting to leave the room or stop the record. Stick to the screams and leave those passionate cries on the cutting room floor. (RC)
(Commitment, Klein Muiden 38, 1393 RL Nigtevecht, NETHERLANDS, commitment@poisonfree.com)

ONE MAN ARMY - "Victoria/She Wants Me Dead"

This 45 was recorded back in October 2001 and by that point, the band had shifted to a full-fledged pop-punk outfit. This band's best record was their first TKO single "Bootlegger's Son/Another Deadend Story" that they put out many years ago. It's been all downhill since then. This current pop approach is essential listening for the Warped Tour/alternative rock/ Macy's punks. The "steetpunk lite" that ONE MAN ARMY plays remains very popular with the youth today. Get it now if you want it—it's part of a limited Fat Records Club Issue. (BR)
(Fat Wreck Chords, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.fatwreck.com)

ONLY WAY OUT - "Twoje Slowa" EP

A sweet record from this straight edge hardcore band out of Poland. This definitely has a more raw, older straight edge sound not unlike the UNITY 7". The singer almost has that trademark California voice inflection that a lot of the California bands had around 1984-'85 (except for the fact that he is sings in Polish). A great debut worth checking out. (CC)
(Robert Matusiak, PO Box 7, 02-792 Warszawa 78, POLAND, refusexresist@go2.pl)

THE ORDER OF THE FLY - "Dying Season" EP

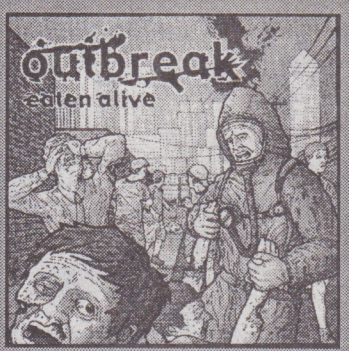
This record is so cheesy, it's fucking great. Imagine a band obsessed with horror rock and industrial dance, yet with a definite FACE TO FACE influence on the first track. The next track is an ode to Halloween done in a boring old modern hardcore style with an industrial edge. It's the second side where this record really shines. After you get the obligatory cover of the MISFITS' "I Turned Into a Martian," you get a really funny cover of NINE INCH NAILS's "Head Like a Hole." That track alone had me rolling. Oh and the fact that *MRR*'s lights keep flickering just add to the whole aura. (JF)
(Mad Science, 1580 F St, San Bernardino, CA 92405, www.orderofthefly.com)

ORPHANS - "Nobody's Fool" EP

Trash can recording... girly vocals... neato layout... this is good. It sounds like something Rip Off might put out (if the production was stronger). This lady sounds angry about something... It's aggro dude. Garage swanky aggro girl rock. Fer sure. (BM)
(Malo, 6307 Northside Dr, Los Angeles, CA 90022, dirtyorphans@yahoo.com)

OTOPHOBIA/R.O.I. - split EP

OTOPHOBIA: quick tempoed, crust-vocaled hardcore. Solid guitar work, a good recording, a cool skull drawing on the cover; thumbs up. R.O.I. are similar enough in sound to OTOPHOBIA to warrant a split between the two, although R.O.I. has a more Euro hardcore sound than their split-mates, reminding me slightly of Spanish crossover monsters OVERTHHHROW, of all bands, on the second song. Overall, I like the OTOPHOBIA side more at this moment. (WM)
(Burrito c/o Sound Idea, PO Box 3204, Brandon, FL 33509-3204)



OUTBREAK - "Eaten Alive" EP

Are they really from Maine? Five tracks of top-notch hardcore that brings to mind that modern moshy style you often times find being released on Bridge Nine (think TERROR or AMERICAN NIGHTMARE) these days mixed with the raw edge of bands like TEAR IT UP or DOWN IN FLAMES. Powerful recording that serves the songs quite well, and more of that top notch Mike Bukowski artwork. (MT)
(Western Front, 1812 11th St., Manhattan Beach, CA 90266)

PAGENINETYNINE - "Document #7" LP

First off, this LP came out some time ago as we are already up to...what is it now? Document 11? I think that was the most recent 7"... Anyway, I've always been a fan of PAGE 99 ever since I saw them on their first and second US tours. The band is explosive and has an excellent sense for the dramatic—we know what to expect by now from PAGE 99. However, that statement itself seems like a double-edged blade. Where the earlier recordings seemed to aim for the jugular, this release aims a bit lower and concentrates on these droning epics that really don't have the closure or impact that was such a feature of previous "documents". This is not to completely discount this shift in strategy—the musicianship is excellent, the production even better. I just wish that the full force, not mere traces, of their previous urgency were more visible on this record. (SP)
(The Magic Bullet, PO Box 6337, Woodbridge, VA 22195, www.magicbulletrecords.com)

PANIC IN DETROIT - "We Own Everything" CD

I swear this sounds like a punk rock GIN BLOSSOMS, tambourine and all. Throw in the WEEZER influence that no one can seem to shake these days, and you've pretty much got this Houston, Texas-based band. I like it, but hey, I liked the GIN BLOSSOMS too, so go figure. (MX)
(Silverthree, PO Box 3621, Fairfax, VA 22038, www.silverthree.com)

PARASITES/SEVENFOOTMONSTER - split CD

PARASITES, not the better-known American band, but a British band which existed in the late 80s, start off this CD with seven songs. They are really straightforward like the RAMONES, but also with the punch of DEAD BOYS or the REPLACEMENTS' more rockin' stuff. Good stuff. SEVENFOOTMONSTER does similar kind of stuff, sped up a little, with annoying metal riffs kind of inserted all over the place. The lyrics are not great. Not a bad split, but nothing to write to Indiana about, either. (WR)
(Retch, 48 Rose Crescent, Woodvale, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 3RZ, ENGLAND)

PHOBIA/RESIST AND EXIST - split LP

Well after a super long intro, RESIST AND EXIST finally got down to business and blow through some great charged political/peace punk. I bet these kids have spent years listening to everyone from CONFLICT to CRUDE SS culling their politics and musical styles. PHOBIA (who have been one of my faves for a long time) fucking kill it with five more songs of eye watering grindcore. I have noticed that over that last few releases they are starting to slow things down a bit more here and there, but when they kick down the blast beats hang on to your seat. This is a great release combining these two Southern California bands. (RC)
(Profane Existence, PO Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.profaneexistence.com)

PILGER - "Silence" CD

The UK's PILGER present to you fifteen tracks of quick-paced melodic hardcore—sounding a bit like early SEVEN SECONDS—especially on the demo tracks that are included. Good stuff here that is definately worth hunting down. (MT)
($10ppd; Southcoast, 38 Gatcombe, Southampton, SO31 5PX, UK)

THE PINE - "Lead Blocks for Feet" LP

Sure, they may be trying to sound like the HATED, but they still just sound like EVERGREEN (from California), whining vocals and all. (PA)
(Alone, PO Box 4834, Richmond, VA 23220, www.alonerecords.com)

PINK SEXIES/BITTER PILLS - split EP

Bratty and sloppy, that's how I'd describe PINK SEXIES. And I mean that in the best possible way. Bopping, simplistic amateur garage rock that is pretty catchy. You have to be able to handle whiny, obnoxious vocals. I think the music complements them nicely. BITTER PILLS go for a more authentic garage sound. You could easily mistake this for a long lost track. Lo-fi recordings with an organ and distorted vocals. This is great! (CK)
(Domesticity, PO Box 753, Knoxville, TN 37901-0763, pink_sexies@hotmail.com)

PILOT SCOTT TRACY - "Flight 0713" CD

Electronic beeps and burps, squeaks and squawks. 21st Century Jet-age chic. Lyrics scrawled on cocktail napkins pocketed from the SFO International Wing's commuter lounge. PILOT SCOTT TRACY want to be (I can tell) an all-American counterpart for Old World duo STEREO TOTAL. They work the same kinda synth-cabaret routine, alternating punchy and/or ironic girl pop with liteweight science fiction rock. I can and do enjoy *Flight 0713* but I concede that it's not for everyone. The Analog Set will appreciate it, those who prefer their music painted in black & white stencils will not. A suprise winner. (JH)
(What Else?, PO Box 1211, Columbus, IN 47202, www.whatelserecords.com)

PLAN OF ATTACK - "Watch it Burn" EP

Tough straight-ahead hardcore from Chicago. I could see these folks fitting right in with the Bridge Nine crowd… not typically straight edge sounding but you know there's some Xs, crowd sing-alongs and pile-ons at their shows… I'm in. (TB)
(Silent Architect, 1664 N. Vine, #107, Chicago, IL 60614)

POINTING FINGER - "Transcend" EP

This is good. No wait, this is *really* good. I am going out on a limb here by saying that this has to be one of the better European straight edge bands going right now. This was produced and mixed by the infamous Menno Bakker, who has worked with a lot of great bands (SEEIN' RED and SIN DIOS, to name a few). The vocals and music remind me a lot of BETTER THAN A THOUSAND. However, the lyrics are more relevant than anything that BETTER THAN A THOUSAND did, covering everything from homophobia in hardcore to the war industry. The songwriting is just sick. Props to the drummer for stealing the CHAIN fill in their song "Cast of a Thousand Fools." My only complaint is the name, but I got over that the minute I flipped the record over. Get this. (CC)
(Commitment, Klein Muiden 38, 1393 RL Nigtevecht, THE NETHERLANDS)

POINTING FINGER - "Reasons Not Rules" EP

I'll give you three guesses as to what style this band play… Yep, you got it in one— '88 style youth crew. Wait, before you skip to the next review… this *rules*. Well played, rough and super energetic youth crew with a huge nod to that Ray Cappo dude. What makes this EP (and the other reviewed this issue) so different from the rest of the youth crew pack are the lyrics: this Portuguese band have some super smart politicized lyrics about industry greed, racism etc. I'm typing with only two fingers as both hands are pointing as I listen to the record…(TB)
(Still Holding On, 65 Au Long Pre, 4053 Embourg, BELGIUM)

PRESSURE - "Anthem" CD

Never heard of these folks, but their streetpunk meets STRIKE ANYWHERE with super-political protest lyrics sounds pretty good to me. Even though there is nothing in the music to indicate it (apart from the PETER TOSH cover) I get a bit of a rasta feel from the lyrics which is odd but I like it nonetheless. (TB)
(Uprising, PO Box 42259, Philadelphia, PA 19104)

PROJECT ROCKET - "New Year's Revolution" CD

Punk? Maybe not. But if you are into emo pop, this here will satiate you. They write damn good emo pop songs with minimal annoyance on my part. Not only is it emo pop with handclaps, but they're straight edge, too! Musically, it's RED FORTY meets ALKALINE TRIO and the GET UP KIDS. Lyrically, it's the sentimental bullshit and all. It's harmless, but they do the emo pop thing real well. Emo pop. (WR)
(Uprising, PO Box 42259, Philadelphia, PA 19104, www.uprisingrecords.com)

PUDOR CRÒNICA- "Pudor Cronica/Vull Ser El Teu Gos"

This rules. First off, the B-side has got a cover of "I Wanna Be Your Dog" by IGGY & THE STOOGES sung in Catalan. These guys are from, you guessed it, Catalonia (I'm stupid ...probably spelled that wrong). Let's not neglect the A-side, cuz it's great too. Sorta reminds me of the Catalan metal version of the DEAD KENNEDYS. Judging from the cover they got ahold of an issue of *Craphound* over there... Good shitz, buy it punk! (AS)
(Ripper, PO Box 11, 43720 L'Arboç, SPAIN)

RADIO 4 - "Gotham!" LP

This LP is at least a few months old by my reckoning, and it's amazing how rather played out their sound has become in the wake of innumerable bands playing in a similar disjointed pseudo-new wave style. It's just a case of too many cooks on the dance floor. Their first LP on Gern remains their greatest moment. (RW)
(Gern Blandsten, PO Box 356, River Edge, NJ 07661)

RADIO 4 - "Dance to the Underground" 12"

Woah. Here goes. This is really interesting rock/dance music with kind of a new wave twist. The more I listen, the more it's pulling me in. The darker undertones in "Caroline" kind of remind me of TONES ON TAIL, but the vocals here are much more straightforward and abrupt. Fuck, I'm even digging the remix side. God, I got to go dancing. (SR)
(Gern Blandsten, PO Box 356, River Edge, NJ 07661)

RANDY - "I'm Stepping Out" EP

I feel that this band could be a lot better that what they've been so far, occasionally they write a great punchy pop punk classic that raises your expectations high only to be brought down by the next tracks which will undoubtably be some plodding smart-ass knees-up. This record has tracks, song number one is good solid upbeat poppy punk, song number two is an average upbeat poppy punk track, and song number three is a slow mildly amusing political song that has an annoying chorus. It's okay, but I think I still prefer RANCID to RANDY. (AD)
(Fat Wreck Chords, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.fatwreck.com)

THE REAL McKENZIES - "Another Round" EP

Some odd friends of mine liken the ancient, Scottish warriors as original punks. The spiky hair, face paint (?) etc. If that is true, then this band is original Scottish hardcore. The singer has a vague accent and a beer-drinking scratch in his voice. The music is like good BAD RELIGION, but... with bagpipes!!! I say fuck! If you plan on buying a pint and a 7" tonight, buy this record. (JA)
(Fat Wreck Chords, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.fatwreck.com)

REVERSAL OF MAN/COMBAT WOUNDED VETERAN - split LP

Here are two bands that I've always regarded as soldiers in the same war, conspirators in the same conspiracy, their names both so often good markers of a sound that has captivated the ears and "youth-medium" t-shirts of so many adoring youngsters. They were almost *destined* to be on a split LP together. The REVERSAL OF MAN side contains five tracks of technical, brisk hardcore with their singer's characteristic raspy voice booming over it all—a little heavier than their previous material. It's good and polished, but even my patient ears got a little tired of waiting for something more to happen. COMBAT WOUNDED VETERAN, going in the "artistic" direction that seemed all too obvious for them, combine the hard-hitting approach of REVERSAL OF MAN with little oddities and blast-beats that pierce my ears like needles—sometimes this does become painful. I find the COMBAT WOUNDED VETERAN side a bit more of a better listen just because they mix things up (both vocally and musically) a bit more. An interesting record even if it is two "screamo" bands that may have been around a bit too long. (SP)
(Schematics c/o No Idea, www.noidearecords.com)

RIOT 99 - "Last Train to Nowhere" CD

Can we say dumb spikey hair punk? Can we say really dumb? RIOT 99 sound, musically and lyrically, like GBH before GBH went metal. GBH might have had better and more intelligent lyrics, and GBH were dumb. This disc is dumb, but it is sort of fun. (JF)
(Longshot, 726 Richards St, Vancouver, BC, CANADA)

ROCK KILLS KID - CD

A mix of good pop punk with emo overtones and radio ready pop ala the bands you love to hate for selling out, GET UP KIDS, ALL-AMERICAN REJECTS and early JIMMY EAT WORLD. Although this may not be strong enough for the big time, it is an enjoyable punky pop release at this moment. (RL)
(Fearless)

ROMANCE MORGUE - "The Demo Days" CDEP

Five songs from the ROMANCE MORGUE. QUICKSAND, DRIVE LIKE JEHU, NEUROSIS, and JR EWING all come to mind. Heavy and sorta dark sounding stuff, with an eyedropper of the flavor that FUGAZI implanted into punk rock music 15 years ago. The is the year 2003 and this is the direction of modern punk rock. This band played its last show 2/1/03. Thumb up. (AS).
(Alone, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13126, www.alonerecords.com)

RORSCHACH - "Live In Italy—6/18/92" LP

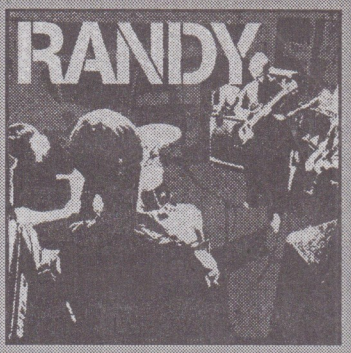
This is a mother of a release. RORSCHACH, the now legendary metal-hardcore-punk band, existed in the early 90s. This is a legitimately released live album of a show from their 1992 European tour. The recording is very good. It definitely gives a feel for the tightness of their live show. The LP contains 17 songs, which includes two-thirds of their *Remain Sedate* album, some from the *Protestant* album, songs from the *Needlepack* 7", plus a BLACK FLAG cover. The record is beautifully packaged, which is probably the best part of the album for me. There is one booklet full of flyers and one full of photos and a nicely screened cover and a poster. Personally, I am hardly ever a fan of live albums. But if you are interested in hearing what a live RORSCHACH show was like, this is a perfect opportunity. The release is really well produced. There is also a non-limited CD version of this, which is cheaper and more widely available. (WR)
(Gern Blandsten, PO Box 356, River Edge, NJ 07661, www.gernblandsten.com)

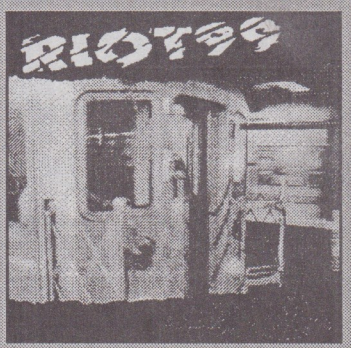
RORSCHACH - "Protestant" LP

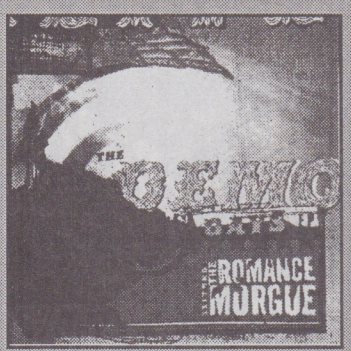
One part CORROSION OF CONFORMITY, one part VOIVOD, one part BLACK FLAG—their brutal and definatively intense hardcore assault combined with trademark "I-just-drank-a-razorblade-and-shattered-glass-milkshake" vocals set the standard for the genre. Much like BLACK FLAG's *Damaged* LP, listening to this record, even ten years after I first heard it, makes me want to smash everything in sight. While neither record sounds much akin to the other—they both contain that paticularly perfect yet volatile mixture of angst, rage, fury and hope that equals sheer sonic perfection. Fuck. "Why am *I* alive?" Brilliant. (MT)
(Gern Blandsten, PO Box 356, River Edge, NJ 07661, www.gernblandsten.com)

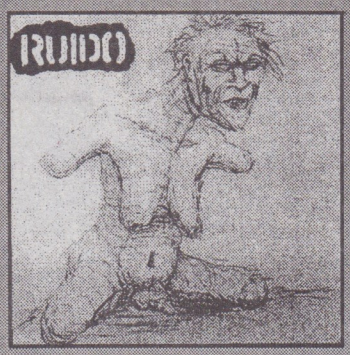
RUIDO - "Solidad Cortada" EP

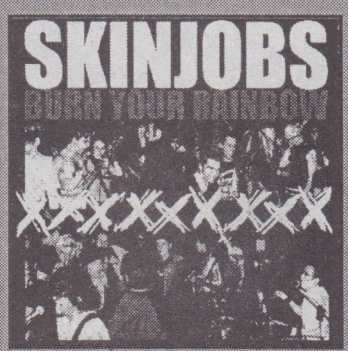
Let me say something here: my old band played with these guys in Santa Fe, and they fucking ripped my fuck! I bought the two seven inches they had then, and I was not disappointed. This new one is also great. Bit like CRUDOS with more guitar hooks and a couple of choruses thrown in. Get this and everything else which is RUIDO. (JA)
(Power It Up, Postfach 1114, 38156 Vechelde, GERMANY, www.power-it-up.com)











THE RUMBLERS - "Hold on Tight" CD

Second rate melodic punk 'n' roll. Their style seems a bit influenced by earlier SOCIAL DISTORTION but they're way too poppy. Very mediocre. (SR)
(Switchblade, PO Box 266, Pedricktown, NJ 08067)

RUNNAMUCKS - "On the Brink" LP

What we have here is a really good LP from Florida's RUNNAMUCKS. They are a thrashy punk outfit often playing at breakneck speed, but slowing it down with enough interesting parts to catch my attention. It is not so much hardcore-influenced thrash as it is just punk rock played super fast with angry lyrics. I like this and can imagine fun live shows from these brudes. (WR)
(Kangaroo, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA, Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS, Tyson@xs4all.nl)

THE SADDEST LANDSCAPE - "Cover Your Heart" EP

This record just screams emo, from the music, to the band photos, to cute little sayings on the insert like, "for a million hellos and twice as many goodbyes." The vocalist screams to breathless endings. The music is pretty heavy but still catchy due to pop chord progressions. They also have their fair share of quiet picked-out parts. For all those into obscure references, think of something like the CANDYLAND CAR CRASH. (PA)
(Copter Crash, www.coptercrash.com)

SANGRE DE LOS PUERCOS - "They Lie We Die" EP

Sometimes raw blown out recordings work, and sometimes they don't—this is an example of the later. SANGRE DE LOS PUERTOS play rough hardcore akin to early NEUROSIS (without the metal trappings) or CHRIST ON PARADE—but suffer from having a recording that lacks any power. It's just ok—though if this had been a demo I would have thought it was pretty good—but it's just lacking something. (MT)
(Cries of Pain, PO Box 1004, Windsor, CT 06095, criesofpainrecs@hotmail.com)s

SANITYS DAWN/FETUS EATERS - split CD

Split release from these two wacko grind bands. Germany's SANITYS DAWN start things off with 15 tracks of AGATHOCLES-like insanity-induced pissed-off grind, with great vocals shouted in a hardcore manner. The singer of GROINCHURN also appears for a few tracks, but I'm not sure I noticed. Nothing that'll change the earth's gravitational pull here, but this is quality, catchy, pummeling grind from sincere hardcore folks who don't take themselves too seriously. Then LA's FETUS EATERS check in with 28 tracks of their own brand of silly self-described "Tardcore." Song titles like "C'mon, Nobody Really Believes in God," and "Granny Lactates Cottage Cheese" give you an idea of where they're coming from. They keep the songs under a minute mostly and throw in odd bits like horns and samples to keep things interesting. Not terribly essential, but fairly entertaining nonetheless. Worth it at least for the SANITYS DAWN stuff. (EL)
(Regurgitated Semen, c/o Sandro Gessner, Str. des Friedens 45, 07819 Mittelpollnitz, GERMANY, skrupel@web.de)

DIE SCHWARZEN SCHAFE - "Last Gang in Town" EP

Here we have four tracks of anthemic Deutsch-punk from these Düsseldorf punx. Pretty high quality stuff here, with a vocal delivery which sounds dead-on like *Yankees Raus* era SLIME. Melodic and catchy but with a rough edge—I adore this sorta of Germanic street punky style. The perfect soundtrack to having beers dumped on your head or for smashing coppers with your steel-toe caps. (MT)
(Campary, Friedrichstr. 110, 40217 Düsseldorf, GERMANY, campary-rec@web.de)

SCOTT BAIO ARMY/LINE OF DESCENT - split EP

The bio sheet that came with this record was neither helpful nor necessary. I found it completely disgusting. SCOTT BAIO ARMY is described, in said bio, as being "perfect for fans of CHARLES BRONSON & WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?" They play moderately fast, slightly hectic, 80s-influenced hardcore, capturing a little of CB's cynical approach to hardcore with songs like "Allah McBeal" and "Jesus Didn't Get a Wheel". These 11 songs are really energetic, and actually pretty good when you put aside the 40 tons of bullshit the bio piles on... LINE OF DESCENT is perfect for fans of HIS HERO IS GONE, FROM ASHES RISE, TRAGEDY? Not exactly. They trudge through a handful of heavy tunes that have the same feel, but not the intensity or complexity of said bands. I'm a little biased after losing 30 seconds of my life reading that fucking bio sheet. Unfortunately, these bands, while not spectacular, aren't nearly as awful as I'd like to say they are... (VH)
(Paco Garden, PO Box 18455, Denver, CO 80218-0455)

SCUM ALLEGIANCE - "San Antonio HC" EP

What a cool record! The plastic sleeve it came in is stenciled with the band name and record title. The song listings and band info is on a photocopied piece of paper glued to a generic, white 7" sleeve. This is DIY, fucker! This band, vocals included, sound like a young, excited CHEETAH CROME MOTHERFUCKERS. When the music speeds up, it sounds the same. Only faster. I love this record. This is Punk. No shit, that is the only real description. Punk. (JA)
(RS, 3615 West Woodlawn, San Antonio, TX 78228)

SENNEVAL - "Mi Padre el Hondero de la Pistola" EP

Six songs of screaming, fast, rollin' on the floor, kickin' in the drum set, guitar-throwin' hardcore. Well I can't guarantee those last couple, but I'm taking a guess. Throaty screaming, fast drumming (with mosh parts of course) and hectic guitars. It's pretty technical stuff, with lots of odd time changes and all. (PA)
(City Boot, 575 O'Farrell St. #504, San Francisco, CA 94102, http:/senneval.topcities.com)

SHARK ATTACK "Feeding Frenzy Demo" EP

Yo! This is hardcore, like weedpulling breakdowns, stomping, windmilling, and even circle pitting shit, kid. Sounds straight outta NYC circa '88 ...but it's not, it's current! No shit! If I was told this was some band that used to play CBGB's in the late 80s with WARZONE, and CITIZENS ARREST, I'd believe it. Hell's yeah—damn good shit. I'm all for the new bands playing the old sound, but just do it well—SHARK ATTACK does it well. (AS).
(My War, 35 Kings Circle, Malvern, PA 19355, www.mywarrecords.com)

SICK TERROR - "43 Segundos" EP

Brasil's SICK TERROR hits you like a piledriver, with manic energy and vocals that bring to mind a more hectic LOS CRUDOS. These guys have really nailed down a unique style, combining elements of Brazilian, American, and European hardcore to create these nine songs of unbelievably fast, raw, and intense hardcore that are by far the best they've done yet. They even do a SEEIN' RED cover. I couldn't ask for more. (VH)
(A/C Fabio Do Valle, Box 155, Cep 09910-970, Diadema SP, São Paulo, BRASIL, www.sickterror.cjb.net)

SKINJOBS - "Burn Your Rainbow" CD

Now this is what I call a punk record!!! SKINJOBS are a trio of queer punks who don't take any shit but seem to have fun with it. Taking on both the mainstream queer and straight societies, all while playing a style that reminds me of early COFFIN BREAK, SKINJOBS show why it's so great to see so many queers in the scene. Not only that, but SKINJOBS might have the line of the year with, "He can be young and cocky or he can be old and stocky, as long as as his record collection keeps me a rockin'." Buy, buy, buy (but in a supportive, not overly consumerist way). (JF)
(Agitprop!, PO Box 748, Hanover, MA 02339)

SLEETMUTE NIGHTMARE - "Whites" EP

The band plays one or two "riffs" and yells/screams over them. Fast and complicated, but without a punch line. I need a reward for paying attention, dammit! (RW)
(Fast Weapons, 120 State St., NE #300, Olympia, WA 98501)

SLUM CITY - "Hot Beef Rejection" CD

This band makes me feel sexy. I don't know if I can take it. I wanna start dancing (nekkid) on the tables here at *MRR*, but that's a good way to not get invited back (or Arwen would ask me to come over all the time). JOAN JETT is hot, and so are the LUNACHICKS. (MM)
(Super Secret, PO Box 1585, Austin, TX 78767)

THE SOCIALS - "Narrow-Minded Entertainment for a Close-Minded America" CD

This band is really basic and raw, but not in that lo-fi garagy way. The SOCIALS are more just a primitive sounding punk band with female vocals that remind me a little of early BIKINI KILL mixed with X-RAY SPEX sans the horns. This isn't bad, but the songwriting isn't there enough to recommend as a must-buy. (JF)
(SR c/o the Neus Subjex, PO Box 18051, Fairfield, OH 18051)

SORE THROAT - "Death to Capitalist Thrashcore" LP

Bootleg of this old-school British noise/hardcore/grind off-shoot of DOOM with a serious NAPALM DEATH inferiority complex. This rather curiously compiled boot comprises Side B of the *Never Mind the Napalm, Here's Sore Throat* 12" (minus the last song) and almost all of the 101-song *Disgrace to the Corpse of Sid* LP. As for the music, the *Never Mind...* material is more traditional-sounding crust, but "Disgrace" is some insanely noisy seizure-inducing shit, with so many short bursts of manipulated noise, feedback, screaming, and blast beats. For diehard noise-grind completists worshiping all things ANAL CUNT and beyond, this is where it started, and for a band in the late 80s, they were fairly ahead of their time in terms of mixing MERZBOW-type noise and total blur grind. The hordes of noise-grind bands I regularly decimate in my reviews these days should worship the ground SORE THROAT pukes on. (EL)
(no address)

SORE THROAT - "Death to Capitalist Grindcore" LP

SORE THROAT....ah, yes, that is a name I have not heard in a while. Back in the late 80s these guys were wrecking eardrums and speakers with an onslaught of pummeling stenchcore. Do you like listening to songs that are short, fast, noisy, and tuneless? How about deep guttural vocals spewing out songs like "Burn the Goths" and "Shit for Brains"? If so, then get a hold of this release, push aside your early NAPALM DEATH records, put your earplugs in (especially if you are old like me), and let the mayhem unfold. (RC)
(no address)

SORE THROAT - "F.O.A.D." LP

A limited bootleg of the "legendary" SORE THROAT. This particular LP comprises studio material from 1989 on the A-side, and a live soundboard recording from 1990 on the B-side. The studio tracks are six long instrumental songs that were OK for what they were, but I wasn't really impressed. The live material is a decent enough recording that is noisy and thick with distortion. My money was on the B-side. (WM)
(no address)

SQUASH BOWELS - "Something Nice" EP

Straight-up gurgling grindcore from these long-running Polish sickos. In classic *Reek of Putrefaction*-era CARCASS form, the vocals sound like diarrhea splattering over the microphone. And yes, that's a good thing. Good sound quality for these guys too. Nothing revolutionary, but very solid material for fans of gore-grind. (EL)
(Obliteration, 3-41-16 Sumida, Sumida-ku, Tokyo 131, JAPAN)

STAR SPANGLED BASTARDS - "For a Ride/Useless Information"

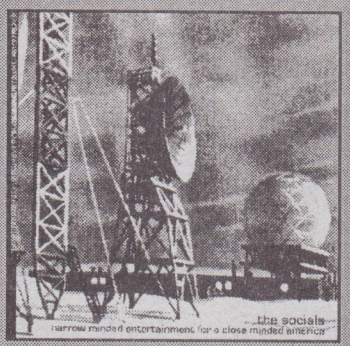
You can always count on hearing something good when you see the Estrus logo stamped on the back of a record. These BASTARDS belt out two songs that cut to the shit and just plain rock. They sound like a VALENTINE KILLERS 45 on 33 ...and that's not bad, cuz this is rock 'n' roll in its purest chemical form—fuzzy amps and distorted guitars. I imagine if I was walking around Tacoma some night I'd hear music like this thumping through the walls of some dive bar with a half burnt out neon Olympia sign.. I'd go in, have a beer, and be happy. (AS)
(Estrus, PO Box 2125, Bellingham, WA 98227, www.estrus.com)

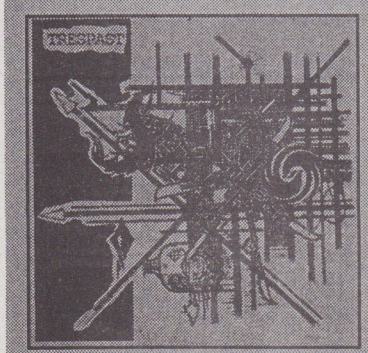
STEEL RULES DIE - "Nostalgia for Beginners" CD

First off, this seriously sounds like it should be on No Idea records. Why? Well, I'll tell ya: these Englishmen play high-energy melodic hardcore with crunch-crunch guitars—like HOT WATER MUSIC or SMALL BROWN BIKE, with solos like SAMIAM, and wave-your-fist-in-the-air-and-sing-along-with-the-crowd call-and-responses, sorta like TEAR IT UP. Yes, SRD do all of this, and they do it well. I have a strong feeling this band's going to get pretty popular with the young lads. Are you listening lads? You should be, because this is for you! (AS).
(In At The Deep End, 82 Barlow Dr, Awsworth, Notts, NG16 2TD, ENGLAND, www.inthedeependrecords.com)

STEVE CABALLERO - "Bandology Vol.1" CD

Is the Tony Alva collection right around the corner? A "best of" the bands well known skater Steve Caballero has played in. A few tracks from the FACTION, ODD MAN OUT, SHOVELHEAD, and SODA. Ranging from skate punk to pop punk with a little college rock mixed in at some point. I liked these records as they came out (me and Steve go way back dudes, much farther than we would like to remember) and they sound fine here. This is a good sample but I recommend going out and finding the complete CD's and LP's as well. (RL)
(Sessions)





STRIKE ANYWHERE - "Bread or Revolution" EP

I must confess I've never paid too much attention to STRIKE ANYWHERE, but this isn't quite what I remembered them sounding like. These two songs are fast, pissed, melodic hardcore, heavy on the harmonies, ringing guitars, and breakdowns. If you're a fan of this band or this style, this is definitely something to snap up. (AM)
(Fat Wreck Chords, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.fatwreck.com)

STRIKNEIN D.C. - "Playing with Fire" 3xCD

I can see some people really digging this ska punk band from Dublin, but it ain't my cup o' tea. Although they've been around for many years, I felt it was a bit unnecessary to actually release a three-CD set. A one-CD discography would have been plenty for my ears. (SR)
(Rejected, PO Box 6591, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, IRELAND)

STRUNG OUT - "Dig" EP

Fucking STRUNG OUT. How dare you infiltrate my life again. Here's the deal: Fat finally sends us copies of the EPs that came out as a part of their singles club, and out of all of the genuinely good bands (check the rest of the issue: STRIKE ANYWHERE, AMERICAN STEEL, RANDY, etc.) I get stuck with this tripe. Because they have been around for so long, I think I can safely blame STRUNG OUT for any slick, unoriginal, pseudo-emotional, skate rock crap that gets put out. This is slightly better than their rap-metal spattered full length from last year. Kind of like how one gunshot to the head would be slightly better than two. (MX)
(Fat Wreck Chords, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.fatwreck.com)s

SUBSONICS - "A Lot to Forget" LP

Hey, is LOU REED moonlighting in a lo-fi band from Georgia? I'm sure they've never heard that before. Disjointed, simplistic, melodic tunes provide the background for the lyrical wanderings on this LP. A bit more peppy than their other releases, it fits in nicely with the atmosphere at the temporarily empty *MRR* headquarters. (CK)
(Slovenly, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504, subsonics@hotmail.com)

SUGAR PIE KOKO - "Shoplifter" EP

Why anybody would ever call their band SUGAR PIE KOKO is beyond me. Nonetheless, if your are into spastic screamo mixed in with straight-up thrash, then this may be your thing. Sometimes rawness and feedback are a good things to hear in a recording, but I found this to be a little too raw and sloppy. Mediocre at best. (RC)
(Putrid Filth Conspiracy, Box 7092, South, 200 42 Mälmo, SWEDEN, www.flyto/putridfilth)

SUICIDE FILE - "Twilight" LP

Holy shit, this record rules. I never thought the words post-hardcore rock would cross my lips in describing an album that I can't stop listening to, but here I am at *MRR* writing to tell you just that. If SWIZ and AC/DC got into a fight, and the singer for NO REPLY stood over them to egg them on, this is what it would sound like. Dave's lyrics are intelligent and well constructed, and are what make this record really stand out above the other bands attempting this style. Each song is completely relevant without sounding cliché. Song topics include everything from the white flight epidemic to George Bush. I know the year has just started, but I think we might just have a contestant for album of the year. (CC)
(Indecision, PO Box 6052, Garden Grove, CA 92846)

SWINGIN' UTTERS - "Black Mountain Rain" EP

I guess Fat Wreck Chords has started a singles club (ironically enough called the Fat Club) and they just send us an assload of them, each one more obnoxious than the other. I lucked out. The SWINGIN' UTTERS deliver two country twang, gravel-voiced tunes that are nothing like the UTTERS I remember from my youth. Whatever—this sounds better. I feel sorry for the other reviewers who get the other Fat Club singles. Suckers. (BM)
(Fat Wreck Chords, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.fatwreck.com)

TARANTULADA - "What Young People Say" EP

Wow. This band sounds almost exactly like the CANDY SNATCHERS. The only things missing are Larry's distinctive voice and Matthew's amazing guitar playing, or these guys could be a cover band. But what the fuck? There are a million worse bands to emulate so you might as well pick one of the best. Fast punk rock. It's there and then it's gone. It still sounds good. (CK)
(Get Some!, 6201 15th Ave. NW, B#529, Seattle, WA 98107-2382)

TEEN CTHULU - "Ride the Blade" LP

From Seattle, Washington, teen heartthrobs TEEN CTHULU step up to the plate to deliver more than their fair share of audio-violence via their first full-length LP release, and I would have to say that it's a definite doozy. Violent, violent hardcore with death metal styled keyboards driving the songs with their "opera gone bloody bad" sound and at other times providing a droning under-layer, giving their songs a spooky, not-all-is-quite-right vibe. With titles like "Wolfhunter," "Ready the Guillotine," and "Hillgiant Witch," I'm sure you can ascertain that these guys are not your average political crust-thrash unit, instead preferring to revel in the bloody imagery that their cover art offers and their lyrics reinforce. Maybe I can start a trend by calling this style death violence, as to my ears TEEN CTHULU sounds like what DESPISE YOU and CRADLE OF FILTH would sound like if they were the same band (death metal x power violence = death violence). Ha! Anyway, methinks that this is a damn good record and for sure, the more adventurous of you out there would enjoy it as much as I do. (WM)
(Life Is Abuse, PO Box 20524, Oakland, CA 94620, www.lifeisabuse.com)

TENNESSEE BEATS - "A Place in Reno/Tell Tale Heart"

First off, the TENNESSEE BEATS are from a place no where near Graceland, Dollyworld, or Nashville. In fact, they are from Norway. A land filled with hardcore and rock 'n' roll garage bands. These fellows fall into the latter category. Yes sir, rock 'n' roll that played much like their neighboring Swedish predecessors the HELLACOPTERS with a couple guitar riffs that could've been taken directly from an ALL record. The result is polished and quite mediocre. Excuse me waiter, could I get more balls please? (AS)
(Stiff Little, c/o Johan Forsberg, Hansteens Gt 7A, 0253 Oslo, NORWAY www.tennessebeats.com)

TIME U.K. - "One More Time" CD

This band featured Rick Buckler of the JAM fame and some UK pop guy Jimmy Edwards from a band unknown to me, MASTER SWITCH. These guys put out three singles following the breakup of the JAM. Very similar to later JAM *Gift* stuff as well as STYLE COUNCIL. We are talking early 80s here, people. Anyways, Bruce Foxton also of JAM fame came on board at the end with a release under the name of SHARP. A historical collection for the mod revival crowd and a good batch of songs as well. (RL)
(Detour)

TIP TOPPERS - "Packed to the Rafters" LP

More Nordic wuss pop! Yeah, right on motherfucker. They got Morten from the YUM YUMS in their ranks and sound a lot like those Yummy motherfuckers. They got one of the dudes from GLUECIFER too. Jesus, this is a Nordic all-star band. 11 tunes, all cavity-inducing, hand-holding music. Makes me wanna be all shy and goofy around girls again. (BM)
(Sounds of Subterrania, PO 103662-34036, Kassel, GERMANY, www.soundsofsubterrania.com)

TOTAL SOUND GROUP DIRECT ACTION COMMITTEE - "All Sounds Are Valid" EP

BOOKER T & The MG'S meets POISON 13. Grovelly moaning vocals over organs, distortion, feedback, and bluesy guitars. There's not much info on the sleeve but that has got to be Tim Kerr on vocals. This is punk rock soul—SAM & DAVE with leather jackets. This is brilliance. And I ask: "What are you doing to participate?"(AS)
(Estrus, PO Box 2125, Bellingham, WA. 98227)

TRESPAST - "Killed by Koncrete" EP

This is a re-release of the highly sought hardcore EP from these Jersey blokes. They have plenty of sound bytes between their urgent, tight, crunchy songs. They splurged for the original red vinyl, but the new blue cover isn't as appealing as the original yellow cover. A good record, well worth the repress. (HM)
(Trespast, 881 Shadowbrook Rd, Ridgewood, NJ 07450)

TROPIEZO/OPUS DEAD - split EP

OPUS DEAD headbang their way through a couple of songs of crossover thrash. I think they thought they would be funny and put a jazzy number at the end. I think I missed the joke. TROPIEZO were more straightforward punk, with some thrash and occasional melody thrown in. Neither side did much for me, though I did like TROPIEZO more. (RC)
(Where's Your Anger, PO Box 471, Boston, MA 02134)

TROPIEZO/OPUS DEAD - split CD

I hate split CDs, I really do. At least with split vinyl, if you don't like one of the bands you don't have to ever play that side again—easy enough—but not with split CDs; there's more work involved, not to mention the confusion that can arise when written track listings don't agree with the CD track numbers—as with this CD. With that aside, TROPIEZO come from Puerto Rico at a good pace, playing hardcore with a late 80s crossover sound: metal-influenced riffs, including wanky little lead licks, played at hardcore speeds. Not bad. OPUS DEAD, from Madrid, Spain, pick up the second half of this short CD, sounding not that far off from TROPIEZO, except that their tempo is a little slower and the vocals are gruffer, older-sounding. Not bad either. I like their shout-along parts. Both bands sing in their native languages, which gives 'em that great 80s international hardcore feel, like something you'd find on a *BCT* comp. (WM)
(Discos de Hoy, Calle 4, c-5 Parque Montebello, Trujillo Alto, PR 00976, discosdehoy@yahoo.com)

TUPAMAROS - "Beyond the Bias" CDEP

Germany's TUPAMAROS is good. This band plays sincere (from the heart) hardcore in the emo vein of early TEXAS IS THE REASON, with political lyrics and a bit of a harder-hitting DRIVE LIKE JEHU edge to it. Ten years ago I would have labeled this "emo-core," but nowadays that phrase is so diluted and watered down by dogshit magazines like *Spin* that the very mention of it makes my head spin into a mental tirade: "blahhhhh, fucking mainstream infiltrators watering down and commodifying the world of punk rock that I loved so much." Ugh, it's depressing—so I won't label it that. I'll just label it good. (AS)
(Scene Police, D.P. Merklinghaus, Humboldtstr. 15, 53115 Bonn, GERMANY, www.scenepolice.de)

UNDEAD - "First, Worst, and Cursed" LP

Not to be confused with the post-MISFITS UNDEAD, this is the SF combo from the late 70s. This band is mostly known for "Hitler's Brain" on the second *SF Underground* comp EP. I remember these guys being more gutter punk than this LP. This LP is pure ghoul/horror punk from way back then. Good stuff though for being unreleased. The one thing I will always remember most about this band is when I saw the singer Sid Terror at the front of the stage at the first PUBLIC IMAGE show here and how he was a dead ringer for Sid Vicious. It was scary. (RL)
(Dionysus, PO Box 1975, Burbank, CA 91507,www.the-undead.com)

USE TO ABUSE - "Nothing Left to Lose" CD

Decent punk 'n' roll with a heavy country twang. These honky-tonk boys are pretty entertaining and gave me a good laugh. (SR)
(Hulk Rackorz, Eichendorffstrasse 1, 93051 Regensburg, GERMANY, hulk@punk.de)

VANDALS - "Underground/Why Are you Alive"

I never was big on these guys. Even the Stevo era was just okay for me. Maybe I can't take funny punk in large doses, especially live. The A-side seems pretty Oi and the flip is melodic punk. If you like this band get this, if you don't this won't change your mind. (RL)
(Fat Wreck Chords, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.fatwreck.com)

VICTIM - "Everything" CD

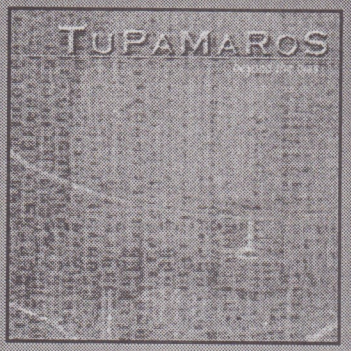
A collection from this Irish band from the late 70s. Although their punk song "The Teen Age" has made it onto some *KBD*-type comps, this band displays a more pop side here reminiscent of PROTEX and the ONLY ONES. This includes everything by the band. As a whole this is a great collection ranging from punk to pop. Twenty two tracks (including 15 unreleased) of strong tuneful second wave stuff. (RL)
(Overground , PO Box 1NW Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE99 1NW ENGLAND)

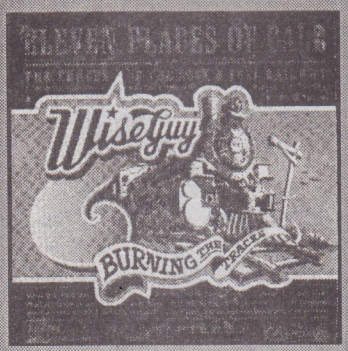
WAKING KILLS THE DREAM - "Depending on Tomorrow" CD

Painful. Painful it was, making myself get through this whole CD. I will never understand why hairband-wearing Midwest straight edge kids want to hear this kind of horrendous tuneless singing in their metalcore. It's like, dude, if you want to clap and sing, just cut to the chase and listen to regular pop music. Cuz this is a poor excuse for melody and a miserable hardcore record. But it's got the singer from MORNING AGAIN (whoop-tee do), so I'm sure someone will make the mistake of buying this. (EL)
(Good Life, PO Box 114, 8500 Kortrijk, BELGIUM, fire@goodliferecordings.com)

WARSAW - "An Ideal for Killing" LP

Formed as the STIFF KITTENS in 1976 Manchester, England after a local SEX PISTOLS show, WARSAW played dark, edgy, minimalist punk rock that mirrored the gloom of their surroundings in 1970s industrial Northern England. These are recordings made in between 1977 and 1979 comprising of demos, live material, and studio sessions. It starts off raw with the "Ideal Beginning" session and finishes with the Martin Hannett- produced *Unknown*





Pleasures LP. In 1978 the band changed its name once again to JOY DIVISION and were on the brink of an American tour and world renown when singer Ian Curtis hung himself, ending JOY DIVISION and ushering in the birth of NEW ORDER. It's twenty-five years since these songs were wrote and about twenty years since I first heard the band and I must say I like them more now than I ever did before. This record showcases the incredibly influential WARSAW/JOY DIVISION at their most stripped down, energetic and "punk" and is truly a must for anyone even reasonably interested in the roots of punk rock and alternative music. The fact that it is streets ahead and just downright *better* than anything around today is a bonus. (AD)
(Galaor)

WATCH IT BLEED - "Unleash the Fury" CD

Five songs of heavy German metalcore action here. Decent, catchy mid-pace to fast stuff with fairly rough production—this is a direction like that found on the last SYSTRAL album, *Black Smoker*—that being more MOTORHEAD-styled rocking riffs—but things do pick up on some songs, like the title track, reaching quasi-blast speeds occasionally. This is competent enough, nothing overly objectionable, but not too special or noteworthy either. (EL)
(Brutality & Bloodshed, c/o Benedikt Wagner, Hohenwaldeckstr. 12, 81541 Munchen, GERMANY, watchitbleed@gmx.net)

WIDESPREAD BLOODSHED - "Get It Into Your Head" EP

This 16-song EP will take your fucking head off! Insanely fast hardcore that is just all over the place; tons of breaks, blazing drums, huge sounding recording with mounds of distortion. Pulls no punches, but it certainly seems like these Swedes are having a great time. Bonus points for the front cover, which features the all-too-common "skeleton on a skateboard," but this time with a gun in one hand and a cop's head in the other! If you like to thrash, then you need this record. Appears to have been released by the band, but their address is the same as Putrid Filth Conspiracy's—hmmmm. (WN)
(Box 7092, 200 42, Mälmo, SWEDEN)

WISEGUY - "Burning the Tracks" CD

Rock 'n' roll from Holland *a la* SUPERSUCKERS. Great guitar solos, but the vocals need more of a punch 'cause they're too whiny. With a bit of a more harder and tougher edge, these guys would be great. (SR)
(Stardumb, PO Box 21145, 300 AC Rotterdam, NETHERLANDS, stefan@stardumbrecords.com)

WOLFBRIGADE - "Wolfpack Years" 10"

WOLFBRIGADE cruise through eight songs of dark bruising crustcore with tough growling vocals. This release looks sharp and comes in a nice gatefold package. Hell they even do an ASTA KASK cover. Definitely worth a listen. (RC)
(Farwell c/o Micha Meyer, Heckenstr. 35 HH, 47058 Duisburg, GERMANY)

THE WONTONS - "Hex Appeal" LP

They've been around for a while: this is more snotty '77 style, with punchy melody, hooks, and get-away-from-me-girl lyrics. At their best they're a little like the SAINTS, especially when the SAINTS cover old American rock 'n' roll jams. At their worst, a lukewarm BUZZCOCKS. Could be a pogoing good time live. (AC)
(Bloody Banner, PO Box 49472, Austin, TX 78765, bloodbanrecords@hotmail.com)

WORLD BURNS TO DEATH - "Spitting Acid in the Face of Human Rights"EP

Fuck. It's almost impossible to describe this in words....but imagine if you will having your face rubbed with sandpaper and then salt thrown on the wound. It's abrasive and out of control—think SKITSYSTEM meets WOLFPACK, but even more over the top. Thats just the music...wait till you read the lyrics!: "Blood will flow in rivers/bombs will cloud the skies/blood burns fucking black/all life fucking dies." Fuck yes. (TB)
(Fight, Hikivuorenkatu 17 D 36, 33710 Tampere, FINLAND)

WORN THIN - "Remnants of What Could Have Been" EP

With faster songwriting and better production, this record is an overall improvement over their first 7" on Malfunction. I am hearing less of a VERBAL ASSAULT influence and (surprisingly) more of a RAIN ON THE PARADE influence. Before you call me crazy, listen specifically to "Here's the Door," and try telling me that doesn't sound like a ROTP song. Side inquiry: In looking at both 7" covers (their first had a Morrissey picture and this one has a picture that was originally used on a SWING KIDS tour shirt)—I wonder if any of these members were originally from San Diego? Regardless, WORN THIN are much more focused on this release, and it shows. Chalk this up as another great Youngblood release. (CC)
(Youngblood, 217 W. Main St, Ephrata, PA 17522)

ZERO TOLERANCE TASK FORCE - "Punk Rockery" CD

ZTTF's simplistic, sloppy punk serves as a minor vehicle for the absurd diatribes of Rev Oralson. Brilliant themes and ideas are laid out simply and effortlessly. There's no remorse, no compromise, and no way the government couldn't accuse ZTTF of being a terrorist group. 28 amusing tunes in all. I believe! (HM)
(Purple Hero Distro, www.zttf.com)

V/A - "Anatomy of a..." EP

Four band sampler of the latest craze in rock and roll, the Portland scene. ELECTRIC EYE are trashy garage rock. CAPTAIN VS. CREW are arty emo. TRIGGERS are punk rock. The HUNCHES are 70s STONES admirers. They even admit it. Their "In the Red" is so much better. A nice sampling of the good things to come. (CK)
(Vinyl Warning, PO Box 2991, Portland, OR 97208-2991)

V/A - "Deny the Report 3" CD

I reviewed a later volume of this awesome series a few months back, so I was stoked to get a copy of an earlier release. Shingo Maeda (Too Circle Recs) really does an awesome job of putting these CD comps together. For people like me who are really into sort of this new school, quirky Japanese hardcore exhibited in bands like the FUTURES or EXCLAIM, this is an awesome way to get exposed to some awesome other bands in that same scene. Some of the better tracks on this volume: the FUTURES, FOODCHAIN, ONE RIVER, MAN FRIDAY, and INSANE 'N THE BRAIN. Like I said, these comps are awesome, find 'em if you can. (SP)
(Too Circle, 3-29-18 Toyotama-minami, Nerima-ku, Tokyo #176-0014, JAPAN, toocir@xd5.so-net.ne.jp)

V/A - "Deny the Report 4" CD

When was the last time you picked up a compilation of Japanese hardcore that sucked? Well, this one is no different—ten great bands that runs the spectrum from basic hardcore to noisy chaos and even a little emo. Highlights include: UNLEASH, BREAKFAST, FOODCHAIN, ANMA (great RITES OF SPRING cover), HELLISH LIFE, WE MUST BURN—but really the whole damned thing is fucking awesome. Packaged as a 7", so keep that in mind when you're flipping through your local distro. (WN)
(Too Circle/Shingo Maeda, 3-29-18 Toyotama-minami, Nerima-ward, Tokyo 176-0014, JAPAN)

V/A - "Menneskelig Stench Volum To" EP

Alright, this comp. has three bands on it. VIIMEINEN KOLONNA from Finland who harken back to BGK in sound and vox treatment, if a tiny bit heavier. INSANE YOUTH A.D. are from Japan and yet still seem to have heard STRYCHNINE. The guitar slide on their track is one of the best I've heard. CONGA FURY claim to be from Japan. I don't believe it. They have to be a creation of, a solidification, of a society fucks nightmare. What human could scream like that? I guess the music might be like VOID, but it's not exactly music. More of vomitous anarchy. A monster punk band. I am in love. (JA)
(Mike Geary, 12 Maple Lane, Harwich, MA 02645)

V/A - "No Hold Back...All Attack!" 3xLP

This is fucking rad—three twelve inch platters that serve as a sonic document to one of the finest, most diverse and united scenes in the country. Every bizarre sub-genre is represented on this compilation documenting the Twin Cities punk scene. Too many bands to list them all but stand outs that make this a must buy are DILLINGER FOUR, CALLOUSED, SWEET JAP, HOLDING ON, RIVETHEAD, SOVIETTES, STILLBORN, SUBVERSIVES, SCORNED, SCAMPS, MISERY and RED VENDETTA. This rules. Yes, please come and see what punx can do. (MT)
(order from Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.havocrex.com)

V/A - "Polar Grinder" LP

I got this record in a trade a few months back and it quickly became one of my absolute favorite comps—shit, favorite records period—ever. No one does grind as well as the Swedes, and this new comp features the absolute best of the current Swedish crop—from older, more established bands to killer newcomers. The cool thing about this comp, which I think serves as a much better introduction to bands, is that instead of one 30-second song from two dozen bands you'll never distinguish between, you get two or three songs from each of nine different bands—this way, you get more of a sense of what they're all about. They're all really pretty great, but the stand-outs are NASUM (of course), the fucking jaw-dropping SAYYADINA (whom I raved about in my Year-end Top 10), Swedish grind legends REGURGITATE, and ASTERISK*, who throw some odd twists into their grind. The other bands are ASSEL, doing more hardcore-oriented stuff, SEWN SHUT, slower like a grindier MAN IS THE BASTARD, BIRDFLESH (members of NASUM), noise terrorists ARSEDESTROYER, and GADGET. I simply can't recommend this highly enough—if you are even remotely interested in grindcore, *get this record immediately*. (EL)
(Putrid Filth Conspiracy, Box 7092, S-200 42 Mälmo, SWEDEN, putridfilth@bigfoot.com)

V/A - "Rocked 'n' Loaded Vol. 2" 2xCD

A friggin' two-CD comp full of punk, surf, and rockabilly. Plenty of good bands and quality tunes. Included are over 50 bands from 10 countries! Bands like: DEMENTED ARE GO, the TEMPLARS, the FORGOTTEN, the HELLBILLYS, the HONKEYS, the AMAZOMBIES, the NEKROMANTIX, and DRAGSTRIP DEMONS. A quality comp. (HM)
(Rock 'n' Roll Purgatory, 341 S. Walnut St, Wooster, OH 44691, www.rocknrollpurgatory.com)

V/A - "Super Sabado" LP

This is a one-sided LP featuring a majority of the bands that played the recent Super Sabado Gigante fest here in the SF Bay Area. ARTIMUS PYLE, LACK OF INTEREST, GUYANA PUNCHLINE, CRUCIAL UNIT, BREAKFAST, KUNG FU RICK, BURN YOUR BRIDGES, HOLIER THAN THOU, KYLESA, MUNICIPAL WASTE, and SHANK all contribute a new song, and each is a good'un, well worth your time. I was told that there were 1000 pressed but only half were sold at the shows (I tried to acquire a copy but it seemed that Ken had already left, taking all the records with him (?!)). I would suggest getting ahold of the three labels involved to try to secure a copy for yourself. I'm going to try. (WM)
(625, Prank, Six Weeks)

V/A - "Their Sympathetic Majesties Request: Vol. 2" 2xLP

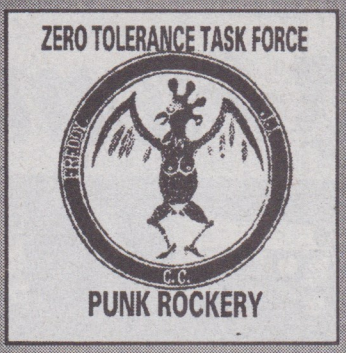
Wow. A compilation of songs that were all put out on Sympathy between '93 and '95. There really is some good shit on here; they needed a double LP. Songs by the HUMPERS, the MUFFS, REDD KROSS, NEW BOMB TURKS, the DWARVES, WRECKLESS ERIC, JET BOYS, GUN CLUB, the DEVIL DOGS and more. Fuckin' A, that's quite a line-up. (KK)
(Sympathy for the Record Industry)

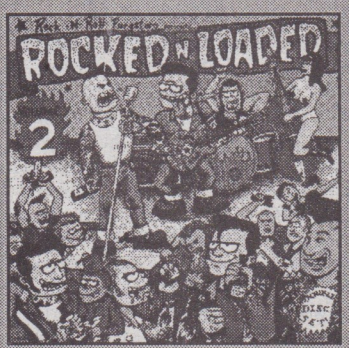
V/A - "This is Toe Rag" LP

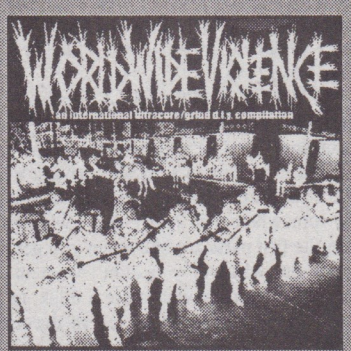
An interesting assortment of tracks recorded at London's legendary Toe Rag studio, largely more or less offbeat updates of easy listening styles (believe it or not) but has requisite rock content provided by the likes of the MASONICS, the SCOUNDRELLES (new band of the SCIENTISTS' Tony Thewlis), and BILLY CHILDISH. (DD)
(Sympathy)

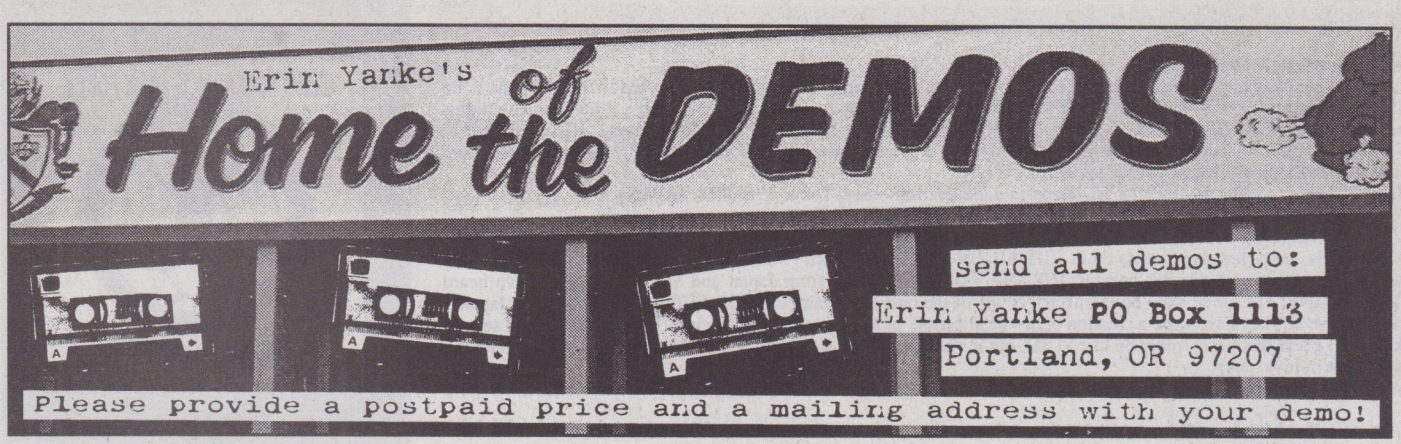
V/A - "World Wide Violence" EP

12-band international grind comp with bands from Canada, Belgium, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Brazil, the US, France, and the Czech Republic. Individual band reviews could get a bit tiresome—suffice to say it's better than average stuff, with noteworthy tracks from FUCK THE FACTS, BATHTUB SHITTER, MY MINDS MINE, DENAK, CATHETER, and NEEDFUL THINGS. This was apparently a collaborative effort between eight different labels, too, mostly Italian. Clearly a lot of effort went into this thing, and it's paid off. A worthy addition to your grind collection. (EL)
(Zas, Marco Tournoud, Via Roma 59, 10056 Oulx (TO), ITALY, zasrec@libero.it)









This month I loved doing this column. Gems, my friends, gems are out there, and if you're bored by the music you listen to, it's all your fault. One tiny rant though, and this is directed to the lyricists. Starting with a disclaimer: I have as filthy a mouth as anyone but really, the songs that go "You stupid fucking bitch, you stupid fucking slut" etc. have got to go. I mean, what the fuck? You got dumped by some really cool girl (and the songs are always about some girl—the songs about the boys don't have to sink so low), and this is how you handle it? That's no way to get the ladies on your side. Or maybe you're just mad and have trouble expressing yourself... but rise above. It's boring, and insulting.

ADOLESCENT WASTE rock it! They mix up the punk and the thrash, keeping it danceable, easy to grab the mic and sing along. The snotty pissed vocals shout and sneer. Total quality, old fast Texas style oozing with palpable energy, and a theme song. I love this band. ($2. 6 song cassette, although no song listings, and no lyrics included. 502 Lockhart Dr., Austin, TX 78704.)

BIG BUBBA carry on in the tradition of homegrown Oregon hardcore, mean as hell and not backing down. They drank the same water as the young POISON IDEA, although it is a different world now. That must account for the differences, which are they have less parts per song, and the vocals are more gruff and guttural screaming. Their slow parts groove. Plus, how can you not love a band that hates Eugene? (12 song CD, lyric sheet included. 30700 Lone Pine Dr., Junction City, OR 97448.)

BILLY DIRT CULT makes a second appearance in the ol' demo column, with a live recording. They've still come from the dark side, but this time they're sonically driving a bit more. The slow parts sound are paced like you're walking somewhere you really don't want to go, and then the fast parts are like when you get there and punch out whoever you didn't want to see. The guttural screaming vocals are a thick and chaotic mess that makes sense on top of the music, and blend really well for a live recording. Unusual, and good. (6 song CD, no lyric sheet. PO Box 200072, Anchorage, AK 99520.)

BLACK SHIT is fucking hilarious. They take a bunch of the songs that have been fucking pounded into my head at least through years of radio addiction—"Jailbreak," "Crazy on You," "Dancing Queen," and a bunch of others, and make a ragin' great medley of them. Awesome drumming dominates all these versions, the guitar is pretty quiet, and the vocals are kind of crooning and kind of crazy, reflecting on their originals, I'm sure. A perfect rainy season project. (23 songs make up two medleys on this cassette, no lyrics included. 3103 SE Stark, Portland, OR 97214.)

CALL THE POLICE play on the midtempo, guitar-driven, rockin' side of the punk rock scale, easily danceable but also easy to thrash around with your friends to, depending on which way you express yourself. Think of 80s hardcore before blazing speed and metal came to town. The vocals are a combination of well enunciated shouting and singing, like you could probably understand about half of her words without a lyric sheet. (10 song cassette, lyrics included. 4507 N. Gantenbein, Portland, OR 97217.)

DEAD MISSION vary between the raging background and a catchier slower pace, but they change like first, the verse is tough, then the chorus is catchy, back to the verse (instead of the thrash part/ thrash part/mosh part/thrash part pattern). It's a bit tougher than your standard emo, although they do throw in acoustic bits. The vocals are by the screaming, rolling-around-on-the-floor guy, and some other screamers who aren't feeling it as much, and a regular singing guy who makes an appearance every once in a while. (10 song CD, lyrics included. 515 St. Thomas Ct., Fairfield, OH 45014.)

DRUGS OF FAITH play a full dose of metal aggression, with quick changing parts and crunchy thick guitars, mostly fast-paced, and a vocalist who shouts more than screams. They slow it down about a third of the time, so you'll be able to throw your neck out with some extended head banging. ($2 ppd. 2 song cassette, lyrics included. PMB #570, 21010 Southband St., Sterling, VA 20165-7227.)

I don't understand why the audio zines are not in the zine review section (hint hint) but ***FULL GALLOP*** #9 is an audio archive/map of our scene and the places where you can pull up a beer and a porch and play music with your friends, Dan's version. It's all acoustic, or lets say 95% just to be safe, and it comes with a 56-page paper zine. Fuck yeah. ($3 ppd. 48 song cassette, no lyric sheet included, but a great zine. PO Box 52096, New Orleans, LA 70152.)

I think ***KRISPY PICKLES*** is the name of thematic comp., based on Tuscon, AZ bands from 1992-2002. **CHESTER AND THE MOLESTERS** is a soft and soothing music bed with feedback vocals over it, inspiring nightmares. **THE DEAD ALIVES** have a great crooner and a eerie big guitar sound. Early rockaroll sounding, nice swaying beat. **DIRTNAP** picks up the pace to midtempo rocking, with deep-voiced singing. **G.O.D.** plays an "Amazing Grace" intro, and then busts into it fast-paced, while the vocals growl over the top. "Hey the police are here!" is an awesome ending to any song. **JANE DOE AND THE DECOMPOSERS** play about half their song sort of loungy, then bust into a mid-tempo rocking garage style. Cool sort of strong and moany vocals, too! **JASON'S CAT DIED** play the mid-paced emo, without the hardcore. **LOS FEDERALES** are straightforward rockin', with the appropriate sort of snotty vocals. **IMBILICAL NOOSE** has the BLATZ "sleep little one sleep" guitar noises, and then, after a short slow interlude, goes blasting into the thinner side of metallic hardcore with the "back from the dead" zombie vocals. **YELLOW BRICK ROADKILL** has a mix of kind of English-sounding ranting vocals, with more of an emo full-out singing going on. Musically, they're melodically guitar driven, with a kind of jerky pace, played around mid-tempo. **ZERO TOLERANCE TASK FORCE** plays straightforward simple punk rock, with a cool speaker vocalist ranting about his lucky day. I'm a sucker for a song with a punch line. It's an interesting comp, although I wish they let you know who was still around, and who was circa '92. ($6 ppd. 11 song CD, no lyrics included. Box 195-1678, Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, CA 94704.)

SAINT CANNIBAS play a mellow version of stripped-down early New York scene rockaroll. Maybe it just seems mellower because the sound is clearer, but it's not smooth or clean, just clear. Sometimes it almost seems pop punk-influenced, but not too often. The vocals just barely cross the talking line into singing. (7 song CD, no lyric sheet. 206 Sherbrook Cr., Conroe, TX 77385)

SCREWBALLS play a mix of clean modern punk, like NOFX, but include a horn section. Not ska-sounding at all, though, even though they have the horns. The vocals are clearly, melodically sung, and up front. This is also a CD-Rom, which I think means there's more stuff on here if you're listening on a computer, instead of a CD player. I'll let you know when I catch up with that sort of technology. ($4 ppd. 3 song CD, lyrics included. Concordiastraat 66a, 9741 BH Groningen, Netherlands.)

SGT. SLAUGHTER are a thrashy band, basic and catchy fast stuff that you sway to more than really move to, with a vocalist that has got a higher pitched shout than your standard totally fucking angry thrash attack band. Solid. (4 song cassette, lyrics included. 9 Colby St., N. Billerica, MA 01862.)

SKITKIDZ is a great band, mixing up tough vocals with good rocking basic punk that moves you, or at least me. Then the other half of the time they thrash it up, with all the metal guitar leads you could ever want in a song. This will move you, still, but in a totally different way. I am always excited to find a band that is good at more than the one song they play over and over, and, in that realm, this is gold. (11 song cassette, lyrics included. St. Petrikyrkog. 10, 22221 Lund, Sweden.)

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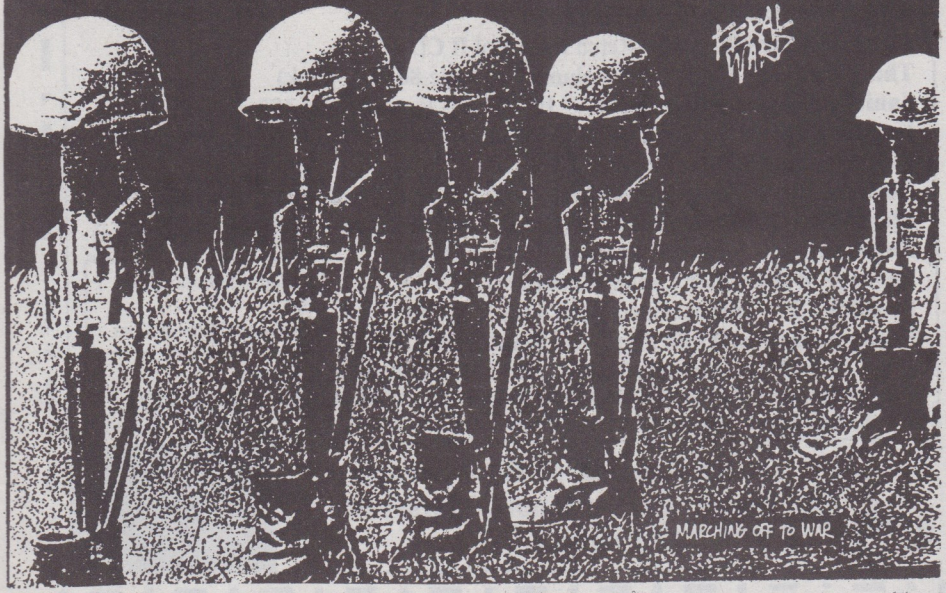

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ZINES

Reviews by: (AC) Arwen Curry, (AR) Aragorn, (JB) Julia Booze, (CB) Chanel Bowman, (BD) Ben Ditch, (MD) Mikel Delgado, (SD) Sara Double-Ears, (KE) Kara Electric, (JH) Jeff Heermann, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (CJ) Chloe Jensen, (JM) Jeff Mason, (JL) Jennifer L. Mushnick, (MN) Mimi Nguyen, (CR) Casey Ress, (MT) Mike Thorn, (GZ) Gordon Zola.

Please send your zine in for review. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and post paid price. If you want us to include a foreign post paid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

ABORT! #11 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 32 pgs
There are a few disposable interviews in this issue (although the name "robot has werewolf hands" is oh-so-promising) and some fairly well-written but poorly conceived editorials. The idea that any punk can think highly of Michael Albert both repulses and horrifies me. (AR)
40 Adelphi St #3 / Brooklyn, NY 11205

AMERICA # 10 / $1
5.5 x 4.25 - copied - 16 pgs
I find it difficult to describe the contents of this zine. It is that gentle blending of the personal and the political that is not so uncommon in zines (particularly those from Portland and Gainesville, for some reason). There are themes of depression and hope, traveling and home. It's a short zine that feels somewhat unfinished, but in a way that makes you feel satisfied with the bite you got. In this issue is a list that I suppose serves to encapsulate the mission or definition of the zine and the writer's purpose—instead I found it a little high-handed. If it serves as a description rather than a prescription then it's great, but maybe it's just what's going on in me that made me feel a bit put off by it's tone. Regardless, this is a zine that one can enjoy and not feel bored or irked by. (CR)
PO Box 13077 / Gainesville, FL 32604-1077

BARRICADA January 2003 / $2
8.5 x 11 - printed - 20 pgs
This issue of this monthly (platformist) anarchist magazine out of Boston is mostly news and commentary about radical events around the globe. This issue focuses on Argentina, the Anti-War Movement, the June 15 Defendants (OCAP Ontario coalition against poverty), etc. The only lengthy editorial is called "The Liberal Attack on the Anti-war Movement," with the same theme. The conclusion to the piece (a rather tame piece, talking about the details of what is necessary for building an anti-war movement) is "Only when the state feels threatened by an angry mass movement from below will it think of pulling back." If such sentiments agree with you, then *Barricada* is for you. (AR)
PO Box 73 / Boston, MA 02133

BOYFUNK #1 / $2 / trades / free to prisoners
8.5 x 11 - copied - 22 pgs
"100% Queer" zine for queer men. Includes the *boyfunk* manifesto, poetry, and interesting reflections at a funeral, but mostly consists of calls for revolutionary queers to fight back against mainstream society and mainstream gays, who would kill or ignore deviants and dissidents. Of note to *MRR* readers is the "Fuck Punk Rock (Or an Open Letter to Punkers)" article. Except for the clever line "You adhere to an atrocious personal aesthetic in order to demonstrate your individuality" and his warning to punks to "Stop letting (. . .) *MRR* (. . .) or whatever run your fuckin' life!" (which I basically agree with because, let's be honest, that would just be sad) this bit of boilerplate rebellion is what made me realize that the "angry queer" zine is its own genre at this point that needs an obligatory "punk is not revolutionary!" article that can be delivered either with a "wow!" or a page full of bitterness. The editor also shows that he hasn't completely purged his sectarian left background with the sentence, "The punk rock lifestyle is a reactionary response to the ills of capitalist society." (My ex-RWL friends told me to ask, did Shanta tell you to write that?) Not a bad zine, but one that needs to develop more of its own voice. (GZ)
Donald Unger, Jr / 12 Edward St / Binghamton, NY 13901
boy_on_boy_love@yahoo.com

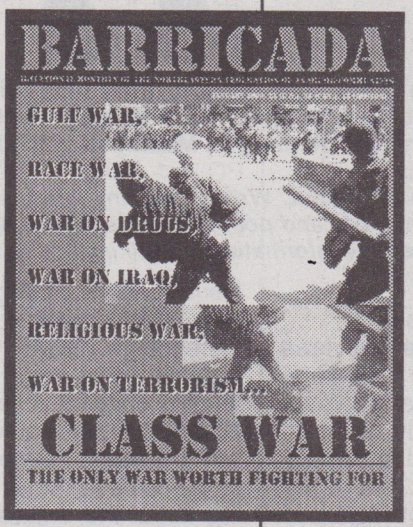
BRAINSCAN #19 / $2
5 x 6.75 - copied - 65 pgs
Subtitled "Typewriters." *Brainscan* editor Alex Wrekk is associated with other projects, including distro Microcosm Publishing, Reading Frenzy (Portland's zine/infoshop), and the annual Portland Zine

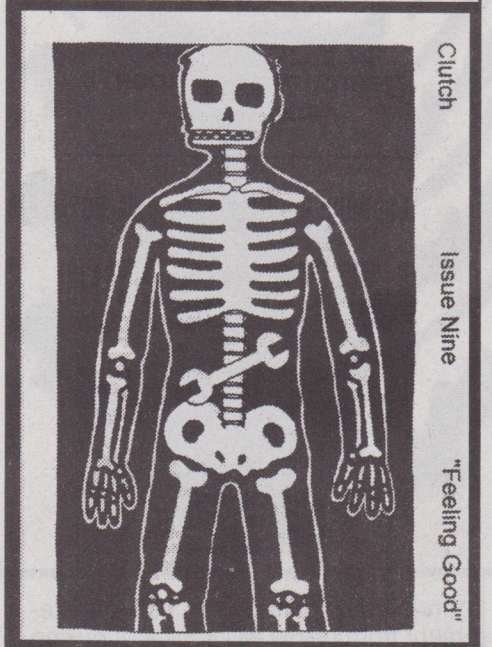
Symposium. This issue is the second or third I've seen, all varied in length and dimensions. This issue is an attractive one, not too gimmicky in the shape or the binding. #19 recaps and discusses this year's zine symposium, interspersed with Alex's reflections on what it means to be a "zinester," relationships between zinesters, etc. Her style is literal: there are few extrapolations and never does it delve into challenging territory. For those in search of a networking resource or a sincere pen pal, however, this could be a valuable item. (AC)
Brainscan / PO Box 14332
Portland, OR 97293
brainscanzine@ureach.com

CHERRYBOMB Summer 2002 / $5
8.5 x 11 - copied - 59 pgs
Grrl zine with an ambitious, large-scale format, though the content might fit better in a smaller frame. The editorial staff is badly in need of a graphics person (pixelization: so painful to look at, so easily fixed) but this made for an interesting read nonetheless. I enjoyed the interviews with "everyday heroines," particularly inner city dance instructor Pepper, and found the article on the lesbian folk scene thought-provoking. Overpriced, yes, but a good read for a waiting room. (AC)
sabrina@cherrybombzine.com

CHUMPIRE # 157 / stamp or trade
3 x 8.5 - copied - 8 pgs
How does a great one-page zine become a great eight-page zine? By cutting it into smaller pieces. It's been so long since I've read *Chumpire*, that I kind of forgot what it was about. You probably know its format by now, though. This issue contains thoughts on Michael Moore's film *Bowling for Columbine*, "party bands," the death of Joe Strummer, and whatever other quick little nuggets he puts down. It's always good, and this is no exception. (CR)
PO Box 27 / Annville, PA 17003-0027
chumpire@hotmail.com

THE CIA MAKES SCIENCE FICTION UNEXCITING #1 / $1 and 1 stamp
5 x 6.5 - printed - 24 pgs
First off, this is a beautifully illustrated and produced zine. A little bigger than a Chick tract, and printed on newsprint, the color and design just made me want to read it. *The CIA Makes...* questions the official line on the assassination of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and attempts to amass evidence, or at least questions, about CIA and FBI involvement in his killing. The author retells the events of that day and has definitely read some hard-to-find books on the subject. I'm wary of conspiracy theory, myself. As a genre, it uses every bit of non-evidence as evidence of plotting and wrong-doing, and can make people discussing it in public look silly (of course that's what *they* want you to say!) But I still liked this well-written zine a lot. Get it. Read it. But use it as a starting place, not an arrival. Which, come to think of it, is basically what the author himself wrote. (GZ)
Microcosm Publishing





PO Box 14332 / Portland, OR 97293
www.microcosmpublishing.com

CLUTCH #9 / $1
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 36 pgs
Greig's autobiographical daily comics are drawn with clean thin lines. I find the act of doing a daily comic engrossing. There is nothing really groundbreaking in here, just a window into someone else's life; like a cartoon version of a day planner. Much like the zine *Snakepit* (check out the split zine that Ben and Greig did) the mundane activities of a couple of guys is turned into a fascinating insight into your own life: what *do* I do everyday? *Clutch* #9 spans the month of May 2002. Greig feels sick a lot, watches movies, and hangs out with friends. (SD)
Clutch / PO Box 12409 / Portland, OR 97212

CYNICAL SOLUTION #1 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 30 pgs
This zine had a separate pictorial mini zine of someone's trip to Holidays In the Sun taped on the cover. There were the basic punk rock band interviews, with the Casualties and GBH. The best part of this zine was a compilation of people's punk rock memories and quotes throughout the years. There are a bunch of hilarious stories that make you want to punch people in the face. (KE)
c/o Elya / 87 Thwaite Ave / Toronto, ON / M3L 2C8 Canada
elya@whatthefuck.com

DIE TRYING #2
OTHER PEOPLE'S PHOTOGRAPHS #2 / ?
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 20 pgs
These two zines are the result of working in a one hour photo—it's a collection of random stolen photos with some commentary on each. There are a lot of great photos in here. The anonymity of it and the possible stories behind each are fascinating. My old roommate worked as a photo developer, and would come home with some wild and weird stuff—this reminded me of those days. The neat thing is realizing that there are many uncelebrated "artists" out there, and that we all have stories we'd like to tell, even if we never intended the general public to see our photos. I'd send a buck or two, no price was listed. (MD)
PO Box 948 / Athens, GA
30603-0948

DIE TRYING #3 / $1?
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 20 pgs
The bulk of this issue is a rather long

article detailing getting screwed by a property management company. Frankly, it didn't get me riled up, given the shit that happens in the rental market in SF—if you sign a three-month lease, don't be surprised if at the end of three months, your rent is increased (the main complaint in the story). Yeah, it sucks, but that's life. The rest of this is a nice tribute to Merle Haggard and a review of the movie *Signs*. Overall, I'd say, skip this one. (MD)
PO Box 948 / Athens, GA
30603-0948

DISORDERLY CONDUCT #6 / $3
5.5x 8.5 - copied - about 100 pgs (numbering them is counter-revolutionary)
Green insurrectionary anarchist journal from Eugene. The more I read anarcho-anti-civilization zines the more they just depress me. Here are some quotes: "(what unites us is) our hatred of all domesticating and dominating powers and our desire to be wild human-animals once again." "We believe anarchy to be our natural condition." "Domestication creates a totalitarian relation with plants and animals, and eventually other humans." I just don't think nature works like that. Sorry folks, there is no natural state to return to (how many thousands of years later?) There is a certain ideology these folks believe in—and try to convince other of—that they try to justify by proclaiming its purity and naturalness, but I'm not buying. I guess I'm just predisposed to be skeptical of revolutionaries organizing under those banners. Oh yeah: this zine is really thick, there's lots of stuff including prisoner support info and news on the most recent bash and trashes throughout the world. (GZ)
PO Box 11331 / Eugene, OR 97440

E. 2ND AVE. HOUSE ZINE #2 / 2 stamps / trade
4.25 x 5.25 - copied - 46 pgs
First of all, come on, kids, you can come up with a better name for your zine than that! It just doesn't roll off the tongue. The contents are the collective writings of a a 12-punk punk house—wow—I've never lived in one that big, myself, unless you count *MRR*... The voices strike me as belonging mostly to folks in their early 20s, a relatively carefree circle of friends who seem mutually supportive to each other and welcoming to the outside punks. The exceptions are writings from a couple in the house, who both voice their confusion and misgivings about a recent abortion.

Other than that, it's a little window on the Vancouver dumpster/bike/house band scene, where you are (say the editors) invited to come hang out on the porch. (AC)
2755 E 22nd Ave / Vancouver, BC
V5M 1E2 / Canada

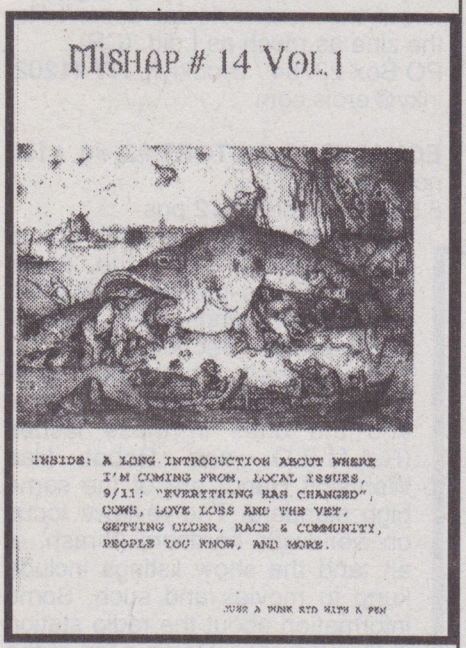
THE EAST VILLAGE INKY #18 / $2
5.5 x 4.25 - copied - 40 pgs
By now I'm sure you know the story of *The East Village Inky;* part comic, part zine, and all parenthood. This issue contains vignettes about snow, the theater, crummy flats, kiddy recipes, and a few pages of vintage *Inky*. It's impressive that after so long Ayun's somehow avoided turning her zine into a gen-ex Family Circus, but to be sure, this is a zine that will be most enjoyed by parents, people who love kids, and those who like to see that just cause you've got two lil' ones, you don't have to become what your parents were. My only hope is that Inky will refrain from writing angry letters if the next reviewer doesn't like the zine as much as I did. (CR)
PO Box 22754 / Brooklyn, NY 11202
inky@erols.com

EQUALIZING DISTORT #2, #8, #10 / no price listed
8.5 x 11 - copied - 12 pgs
A paper extension of the Toronto radio program with the same name, *EQ* has interviews, reviews, ads, show listings, and a small "rumourmill" section. *EQ* DJ Stephe Perry has had a number of great interviews printed in *MRR*, and the ones in these issues (R.A.M.B.O. and Robot Has Werewolf Hand) are of the same high standard. The reviews focus on worldwide hardcore (thrash, et al), and the show listings include kung fu movies and such. Some information about the radio station is also included. Being a fan of the genre covered, I enjoyed these quite a bit. (JM)
35 Raglan Ave, Unit #204
Toronto, ON / M6C 2K7 / Canada

EXTRAZINE #6 / free in Spain
6.5 x 11.5 - printed - 24 pgs - Spanish
Send them some postage for a copy abroad: $2 is probably adequate. There's not much to this: an article on Russ Meyer for those of you with that particular obsession, an article on the Dead Kennedys, and interviews with the (International) Noise Conspiracy and tropical Punk Records. Fancy graph-

ics, cool cover. (AC)
PO Box 152 / Daimiel 13250 / Ciudad Real / Spain
extrazine@terra.es

FATHER'S DAY #1 / $1
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 16 pgs
It's difficult to really call this a zine. By no means does it fall into the standard format of interviews, punk rock writing, or reviews. That, though, may be where it succeeds, while so many others bore the ever-loving crap out of me. *Father's Day* is the story of the fractured relationship between the author and his dad, and how that relationship has been marked and strained by a heart attack. It is touching without being forced. It's a quick read and pretty great. (CR)
PO Box 948 / Athens, GA
30603-0948



FERTILE GROUND #1 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 28 pgs
People have kids. Then people want to tell you all about their kids. So then people do a zine about their kids. Parenting tips with a hippie slant that includes funny illustrations to accompany anecdotes about poop, food, and health. The homebirth story could have been shorter, and the corporate sponsored interior decorating tips left me bored and glad I don't have to worry about choosing frog prince bumpers for a crib anytime soon. (SD)
Fertile Ground / 2084 Court Ave
Memphis, TN 38104

THE HIDDEN AGENDA #1 / $1
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 32 pgs
I never want to have to read about Burning Man again. And what is up with people who refute religious whackos by shouting from the Bible? The intent of this hodgepodge journal is to have a place to talk about what the media ignores, to have a voice that the editor has control over. And while it has that voice, the content falls short. Along with confusing book reviews and an interview with a Phoenix author, there are CD reviews and decent collage art. (SD)
1019 N Central Ave / Phoenix, AZ
85004

HIPPIE VOMIT #2 / $1 or 3 stamps or trade or weed
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 32 pgs
Don't be fooled by the title. *HV* is a breath of fresh air, because it is charming, funny, and introspective. The front cover is this amazing drawing of falling sheep, while the back shows some kids and a dog hanging out in the snow. One section, excerpts from "Unfinished- Untitled" shows the dreamy recollections of a childhood moment, contrasted with a manic awakening. A part that talks about the author's mom having chronic fatigue comes off innocent but thought-out, and affected me enough to stop and think. For your eyes there are pictures from around Europe and some fun with masks. The best story involves a near-fatal baseball game attendance and some thoughts about how getting fucked up is the one thing that unites young people. See if you agree. (JB)
271 Holmes St / Halifax, MA 02338

I HATE THIS PART OF TEXAS / #4 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 26 pgs
I really liked the layout of this zine, which is somewhat artsy. The editors claim that their typewriter sings and tells stories, and that they listen and dance. There is a big section called "Plan B," which is a New Orleans Community Bike Project. It sounds really awesome: recycled art projects, bike shops, shows, etc... The rest of this zine is the writer's thoughts and analysis on life. I didn't really understand a lot of it, nor did it make me want to read on. Look up Plan B sometime though.
PO Box 72581 / New Orleans, LA
70172

INTERNAL PAPERCUTS #4 / free
5.5 x 8 - copied - 12 pgs
This zine contains exactly four sentences, the introduction. It's basically a picture zine of this kid from San Francisco's year-long adventures at Bay Area shows. Bands such as Panty Raid, Sacrilcious, and Scholastic Deth are pictured here several times, just to mention a few. It's somewhat hard to describe because there are 50 pictures or so. If you live in the Bay Area, or want to see what the Bay Area scene's bands look like, this would be a good zine to pick up. I was really excited to see most of my friends captured in a little box, black and white, in a zine. (KE)
internalpapercuts@yahoo.com

KIN SELECTION #1 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 44 pgs
Bad in inception, bad in implementation. The premise of this is that the author started to look for love in the context of personal ads and wanted to share the stories. Insights like "I had a hard time keeping my mind focused on 20th century history and off of her dainty little china flats" and "For my part, people who talk too much are fucking annoying, and not knowing what she was about was probably a bit of a positive." The only cute thing about the entire effort is that all human names are replaced by biological terms; like Latin names of frogs and owls. (AR)
502 S 49th St / Philadelphia, PA
19143

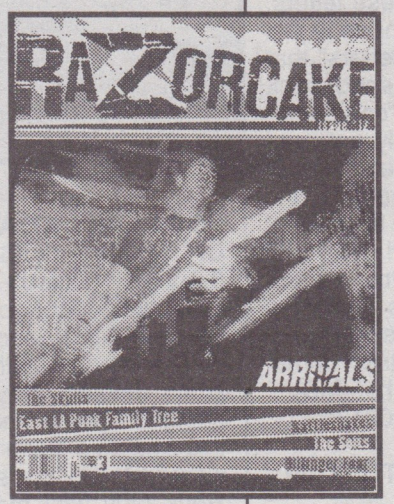
THE MATCH #99 / free subscriptions (donations accepted)
6 x 9.5 - printed - 76 pgs
Well, I just reviewed #98 a couple of issues ago and I don't have much to

add to that review, because *The Match* is nothing if not consistent. You might expect that from a publication that's been going strong for 30 years and is concerned with freedom and "ethical anarchism," but with so many political and anarchist zines out there that are isolated or unreadable (through layout or word choice: it amounts to the same thing), I feel the need to point it out. Regular features on technology and computers, "Who the Police Beat," and lost freedom throughout the world. This issue has articles on the history of the ISBN code, history of the circle-A anarchist symbol, and battles of a person trying to pay for emergency medical care. Huge letters section takes up nearly 50% of the issue. (GZ)
PO Box 3012 / Tucson, AZ 85702

MISHAP #14 Vol. 1 / free / trade / donations accepted for prisoner support
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 36 pgs
Fun-pack! If you order #14 it comes with volume 1 & 2 and 2.5 (the stepchild)! Volume 1 has some serious portions to go with all the fun. Namely, an account of the process of cow branding (reminders that even family farms have to keep track of everything in a cruel way) as well as the really saddening story about vets who take advantage of people that love their pets. There is still some funny ass shit in here, like the article "We Are All Going To Die, Experts Warn." The introduction is the most thoughtful: the editor muses about war and our pacified reactions to it, in a way that got to me. (JB)
PO Box 5841 / Eugene, OR 97405

THE NEUS SUBJEX #48 and #49 / free?
8.5 x 11 - copied - 1 pg each
These two issues of *The Neus Subjex* are almost entirely composed of record reviews and local band news. I've never heard of most of the bands, but reading the impassioned reviews was a pretty intense experience nonetheless—maybe if more kids reviewed records with the same fervor that Shawn Abnoxious does, I wouldn't hate reading record reviews so much. These zines also came with the tiny *Attacking The Nucleus* #3, the print version of the Socials' email newsletter. It has band news and a story about spraypainting raccoons pink. Um... right. (CJ)
PO Box 18051 / Fairfield, OH 45018

PORTLAND RADICAL HISTORY BIKE TOUR $5
cassette and zine - 5.5 x 8.5 - printed - 16 pgs
A very impressive project indeed; a rarity both in its format and in the depth and accuracy of its research. On the cassette, we hear directions to sites of interest to the radical scholar in Portland. At each location, editor Kim Fern describes the site and discusses its significance with a familiarity and ease that betray hours of long research and a genuine, contagious fascination with the material. The tape is recorded live, an edit of two tours conducted in the summer of 2002. Unfortunately, Kim has to lecture at a near-shout to carry over the crowd of punk scholars on bikes, but this seems like a small price to pay for the feeling of a live show. Her intent in this project was to breathe life into radical history, which many of us in the punk/activist world use as a frame of reference. She succeeds stunningly: the lives and times of radicals from 1910 through he 60s are resurrected in three dimensions on the recording, with the assistance of an added reference zine with brief descriptions of each site. This is one of those projects that is exceptional precisely because it is so obviously the simple, right sort of thing to do. It's a cue for the rest of us, certainly. I estimated the cost: all proceeds go to North Portland BikeWorks, a community based, non-profit bike shop. (AC)
3951 N Mississippi Ave, Portland, OR 97227
www.npdxbikeworks.org



QUICKDUMMIES #15 / $3 or trade
8.5 x 11 - printed - 96 pgs
Some zines are totally dull because the editors are too. *Quickdummies* certainly doesn't have this problem. The editor, Robb, travels all over but is always broke and starving and sleeping outdoors, but he mentions these things only in passing. He contributes a long column in a stream-of-consciousness style, and he discusses the Underground Press Conference and the vote to raise the minimum wage in New Orleans (it passed but was struck down by the courts) among other subjects. Robb's grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and comprehensibility are much improved from last issue, which read like fucking James Joyce, but still sometimes it is rough going. He spends two and a half days at a gas station, "awake the whole time," with all the free coffee he could drink. He claims "I can't read or write" and "The Boss (Bruce Springsteen)—you got to love him" and advises *Quickdummies* readers who are single and over thirty to consider adopting "at least one kid around ten years old." There are a few other columns, reviews but hardly any ads. The rest of this huge zine is given over to two long articles—one on primate experimentation and another by a guy who's made many flyers for New Orleans shows over the years, with the flyers reprinted—and interviews with *Clamor* magazine, Against Me, Dead Alive Records, Vitamin X, and Defiance. I would not invest $3 in this, but I am fascinated by it and read it when I find one around. (JM)
6810 Bellaire Dr / New Orleans, NO 70124

RAZORCAKE #12 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 104 pgs.
I'm late to the game—and haven't cracked an ish of *Razorcake* since its inception some 30-odd issues ago. Here's the back of my hand: I won't flinch when you smack it with a ruler. The obvious and easy comparison (to me, at least) is to venerated LA institution *FlipSide* in its prime—glossy, two-color cover, thick newsprint interior jammed with content. From what I'm reading the mag has a healthy respect for Los Angeles p. rock history (as evidenced by their painfully researched East LA Punk Family Tree and interview with old-timers the Skulls) but there's stuff on newer-comers the Spits, Dillinger Four, Arrivals and Rattlesnakes to keep the whippersnappers happy. Good one from aft to stern. (JH)
PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042
www.razorcake.com

REV. RICHARD J. MACKIN'S BOOK OF LETTERS #17 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 40 pgs.
God, I hate this zine. If you enjoy reading really incredibly inane letters that the editor has written to various large corporations, just *crying* for their attention, then you may like this. I don't know what's worse—that he wastes his time writing these letters, or that people would buy this zine just to read them. The "form letters" that most of the companies send back prove how ineffective his "campaign" is—most of the letters only get read in this zine! The ones he sends to the companies probably go straight to the trash. It seems ridiculous to me that the cover says "Protest! It's fun!" because I don't see how writing limericks to Pepperidge Farms about the shape of their goldfish crackers is a form of dissent. For the truly immature who need cheap laughs. (MD)
PO Box 890 / Allston, MA 02134

ROCK N ROLL PURGATORY #9 / no price listed
7.5 x 11.5 - copied - 44 pgs
I'm a little surprised to see a rockabilly-styled fanzine, as that scene doesn't strike me as a readin' crowd, but this zine is fine for what it is. The bands interviewed mostly talk about music, touring, how they met, etc. There are a bunch of reviews, some ads, plenty of pictures of the bands, and a few sasquatch shots, including a passed-out sasquatch outside a cheap bar. The bands include Deke Dickerson, Hellvis, Trip Daddys, 7 Shot Screamers, and the Beltones. I was disappointed in Bill Beltones's opinion that the greatest punk band outta Florida in the 90s, Chickenhead, was "nothing too exciting." (He says he was in the band for a week.) This zine's cover is a lady showin' off her underwear. (JM)
342 S Walnut St / Wooster, OH 44691
www.rocknrollpurgatory.com

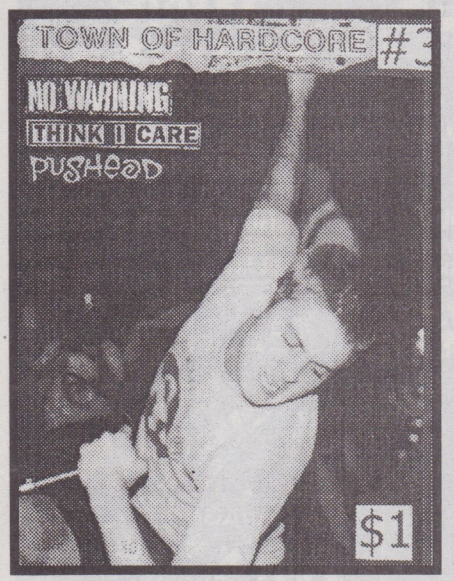
ROCK OUT! IDEAS ON BOOKING DIY SHOWS #1 / $2 US / $4 World
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 56 pgs
A big fuck yeah! goes out to the girls who put this zine together. Motivated by a women's health center in need of some funding, they decided to start booking benefit shows, and put out this zine as a guide for other kids who wanted to do the same. Not only is *Rock Out!* well put together (it has everything you could possibly need to know about booking, promoting, and running a show), but it also looks really fucking nice. These girls have their shit together and this zine inspired me to start looking at booking shows in a new light: not just as a means of entertainment, but also as a way of influencing the environment and politics of your scene. So if you book, want to start booking, or just want to learn about it, get your hands on a copy of this zine. It's fucking excellent. (CJ)
Megan / PO Box 5027 / Chicago, IL 60680

SLAM-ZINE #8 / $5
11 x 8.5 - printed - 100 pgs - German
Despite *Slam-zine's* glossy look, it is a rather good read with some interesting photos. This issue includes interviews with the Flaming Lips, International Noise Conspiracy, Dover, PSY-9, Dick Dale, and the heavy metal band, Man O War, Yuck to them! There are also interesting scene reports from SoCal, and Russia. Finally, there are the usual record reviews and ads. (HH)
c/o Bernhard Sengstschmid / Postfach 100 / A1151 Wien / Austria
www.slam-zine.com

SLAVE #7 / $4
8.5 x 11 - printed - 104 pgs
Somewhere between the 'zine and magazine, *Slave* is a little slick, yet not too sucking-of-corporate-cock (although there are multiple Fat ads). There's a lot of focus on the arts and contributions to the punk/underground scene that aren't just boy-emo-bands: Decent fiction, interviews with artists (Chris Duncan) and writers (Michelle Tea), and a cool piece on punk fashion and gender. The second half of the zine is more generic: boy-bands! Always boy-bands (Converge, Lightning Bolt, Engine Down, and Botch) and reviews. My main critique is that most of the ads are so outdated (album out February 2002? Tour dates for July 2002?) I hope people didn't pay for them! Definitely above average for this type of publication. (MD)
PO Box 10093 / Greensboro, NC 27404
www.slavemagazine.com

TOXIC FLYER FANZINE #33 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 64 pgs
Utterly, completely, and irredeemably toxic (but not without charm and/or personality). Ints with the likes of the Chicken Hawks, Slash City Daggers, Lower Class Brats, Kill Your Idols, Sugar Cult, the Line, and some fond memories left over from the Las Vegas Grind drunkfest of 2001 (I'm telling you, it was something). Vodka-injected rock 'n' roll for functional illiterates, sold with the attitude intact. You got the usual side dish of record reviews and plugs, but it shouldn't

come as a surprise. Outta the city that brought you both Edgar Allan Poe and John Waters, I might add. (JH)
PO Box 39158 / Baltimore, MD 21212 / toxicflyerzine@msn.com



TOWN OF HARDCORE #3 / $2
8.5 x 11 - copied - 14 pgs
Yeah, the reprinted Pushead record reviews were pretty rad (only he would use words like "zoomfest" and "ramcharging"), but the rest of this zine was lackluster at best. Maybe it's just that nouveau youth crew really isn't my thing, but after reading a page of the No Warning interview and realizing that it was just them talking shit on kids they don't like and boosting their overinflated egos, I had a hard time not writing this zine off as juvenile. I pretty much stopped paying attention altogether after the confusing and homophobic attack on some dude named Gibby. This is high school shit, kids. Grow up. Oh yeah, it also comes with issue #2.5, a newsletter in which Agnostic Front calls Tim Yo a "communist faggot." Why waste paper printing this trivial bullshit? (CJ)
1458 Reynolds Ave / Burlington Ontario / L7M3B7 / Canada

TURNING THE TIDE vol. 15 #4 / $15 for 4 issue sub
10 x 16 - printed - 16 pgs
What I've liked about *TTT* has always been the informative articles on struggles I wasn't familiar with. The downside is that many of the pieces are high on rhetoric and low on information. In this issue I appreciated the article on Organization of American States President Cesar Gaviria and his role in the "general" (sic—it's the 20% of the population with the money) strike in Venezuela, and the piece on the sterilization of drug addicts and the venture capitalist who finances it. Also there's a book review and a piece on New Zealand which were too dry for me to wade through. The rhetoric is flyin' in stories I wanted to be interested in (and learn more about), such as the mayor of Lewiston, ME's campaign against African immigrants and that fuck Bratton who runs the LAPD now, but these stories are 10% facts and 90% exhortation. That's fine for punk songs but I like my newspapers closer to the opposite ratio. It's available free around LA and worth a look for sure. (JM)
ARA / PO Box 1055 / Culver City, CA 90232

TWOTHOUSANDTWO
8.5 x 7 - copied - 26 pgs
I am ten. Maybe eleven, walking through the young adult section of the El Sobrante library, looking for something new because I've read all volumes of *Sweet Valley High,* and I stumble across *Go Ask Alice*, that fake diary written by anti-drug enthusiasts to help keep kids straight. This zine is exactly like that propaganda, only with the added flair of name dropping. Alice"'s life was so gritty and enticing to me then, so maybe some youngster who runs across *Twothousandtwo* will be excited about the "juicy" personal bits and recounts of harried drunken black-outs and coke sniffing (just like in the movies!) The edgiest part is where our hero pukes on his best friend's couch, or maybe it is the fantastical throat-slashing of a girl at the end—I can't decide, I guess, because I'm too distracted by the ridiculous self-indulgence of it all. See, what is troublesome about this version of self-disclosure is that it doesn't flow with any sense of the narrative style that makes journal entry types fascinating. It comes off as emotionless and filtered, as if the writer spent a year trying to make himself look interesting. (JB)
8608 NW 59th Ct / Tamarac, FL 33321
blasphemyparade@aol.com

ZOOK AND MAX AIN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE #1 / $1
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 38 pgs
What the fuck? What a strange rampaging collection of comics. I don't really get most of it, and I think that is the intention. A family of oddballs including a goth girl, a dude with horns that talk, some monsters with big teeth, and a guy dressed all in black populate a non-specified two dimensional world. Each strip is like that weird friend that pipes up with non-sequiter comments. (SD)
105 Madison Ave 6th Floor / New York, NY 10016
www.angelfire.com/ny4/timkelly19

ZOOP! #21 / $2
6 x 8.5 - copied - 68 pgs - French
The editorial, commencing with a smarty-pants "long live the new moral order!" proceeds to clearly introduce the contents of this issue, a change from past issues which have been a bit jumbled. As usual, *Zoop!* is jam-packed with useful information for rockers and activists in France and Europe, including discussions of the eviction of a social center (squat) in Valence, RAWA, non-violent protests in England, and much more. As usual, there are plenty of reviews:

music, books, fanzines, etc. Keep your finger on the pulse of activist Europe. (AC)
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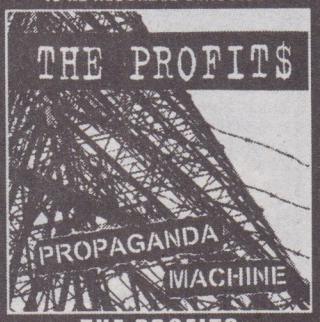

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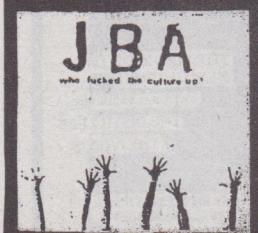

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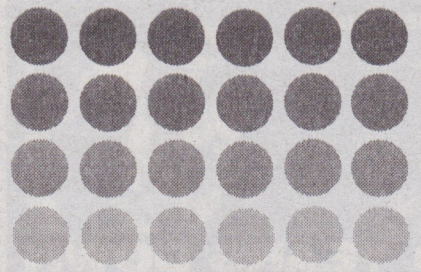

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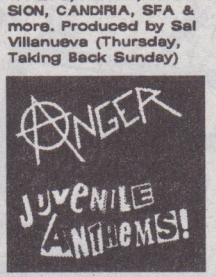

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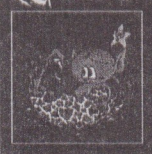

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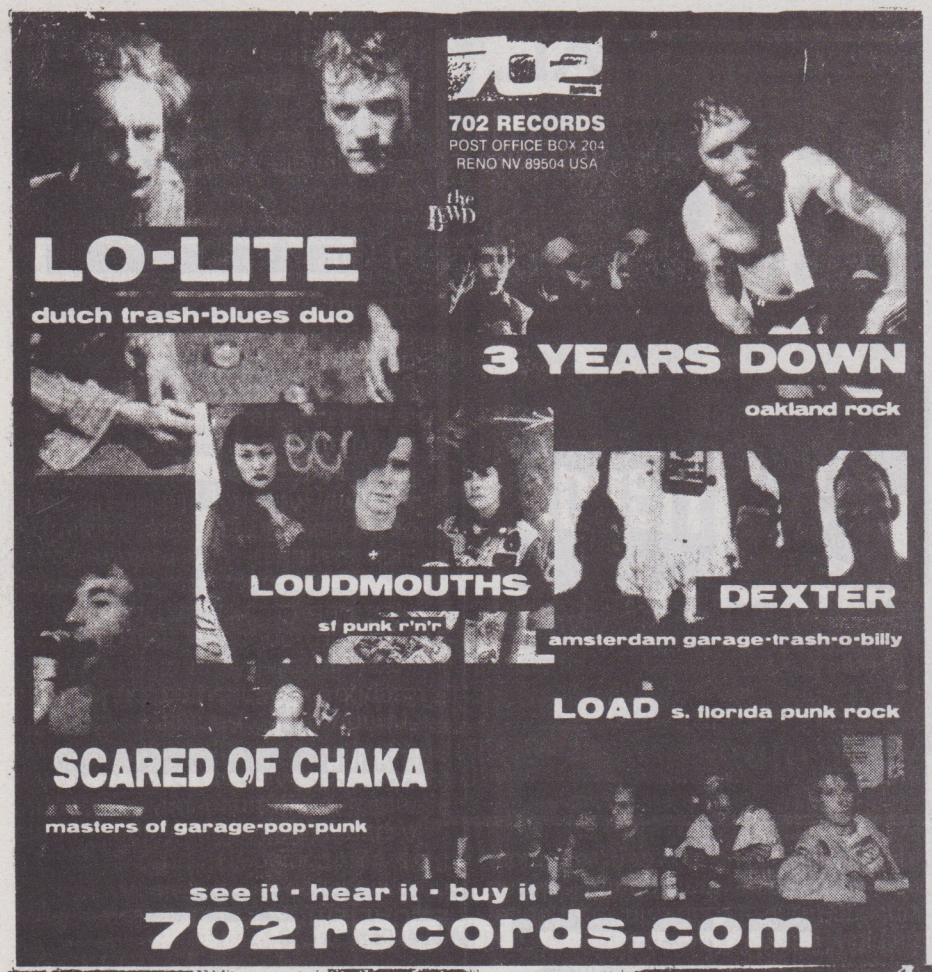

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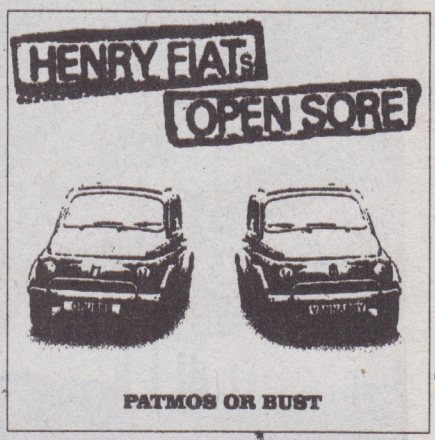

PATMOS OR BUST

OUT LATE JANUARY!!!

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OUT IN LATE 2002/EARLY 2003:

THE FUTURES - Vinyl Lp
Crazed hardcore punk from Osaka, CD on HCR.

REAGAN SS - EP
Pissed LA hardcore....flex your fucking head!

Highscore - 2nd Lp
Faster and rawer than their debut.

GNATS SUCKER- Ep
Great Sapporo HC from late 80s

V/A - Four Corners Positive HC LP
All DIY posi-HC - LIFES HALT, DEAD END, HIGHSCORE, POINT OF FEW and RAZLOG ZA

SPITFIRE - Collection CD
An awesome, yet unknown Sapporo HC act from the mid-80s. Demo, live, CD-rom footage.

I QUIT! - 2nd Ep
Raging Swedish punk like DIE KRUEZEN on crack!

NEVER CONFORM - EP
Sapporo HERESY style from the late 80s

DOMESTIK DOKTRIN - Ep
Crazed thrash from Indonesia

V/A - Possessed To Skate Vol II 10"
With ETA, LIFE SET STRUGGLE, BREAKFAST and SCHOLASTIC DETH

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11 songs on 1 side! Singapore fast attack

V/A Barbaric Norcal EP
New bands from Norcal like VOETSEK, SHARP KNIFE, DYSTROPHY + more!

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LIE - Fast Japanese thrash
GORDON SOLIE MOFOs-Clevo HC
DUMBSTRUCK - UK throaty HC LP
HIGHSCORE - Fast German HC
PLUTOCRACY - 90s grindcore
LIFES HALT/WxHxN - LH rules!
WHN- CD Collects the 2nd year
SPAZZ - CD Collects early stuff
DISCARGA - Fast HC de Brazil
V/A-Barbaric Thrash Vol.3
DOWN IN FLAMES - New Jersey HC
SHANK - thrash from Scotland
RISE ABOVE - Tokyo DIY grind

For more detailed info, check out:
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EPS STILL AVAILABLE:

COMPLAIN - Sapporo HC attack
MAD RATS - Portuguese 80s HC
SCHOLASTIC DETH - 2nd + 3rd
FREAKS - Tokyo guitar attack
CRUCIAL ATTACK - SXE reno punk
LIE 5 Us tour ep
BREAKFAST - Tokyo skate thrash
QUATTRO STAGIONE - fastcore
IRON LUNG - 2 man brutality
THE REAL ENEMY - MN sxe punk
FACE OF CHANGE- Sapporo HC
JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS-thrash
EDORA - Singaporean fast attack
POINT OF FEW - Dutch HC
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